

THE MYTH OF "ROAD RAGE"/ALLEN SHAWN ON CRAFT'S STRAVINSKY

The Atlantic Monthly

AUGUST 1998

"INVENT RADIUM OR
I'LL PULL YOUR
HAIR"

Memoir of a
daughter's struggle
for independence

by
Doris
Drucker

Where America Sheds Its Skin

Up and down
the Pacific coast

by Robert D. Kaplan

THE LIBEL OF
MORAL
EQUIVALENCE

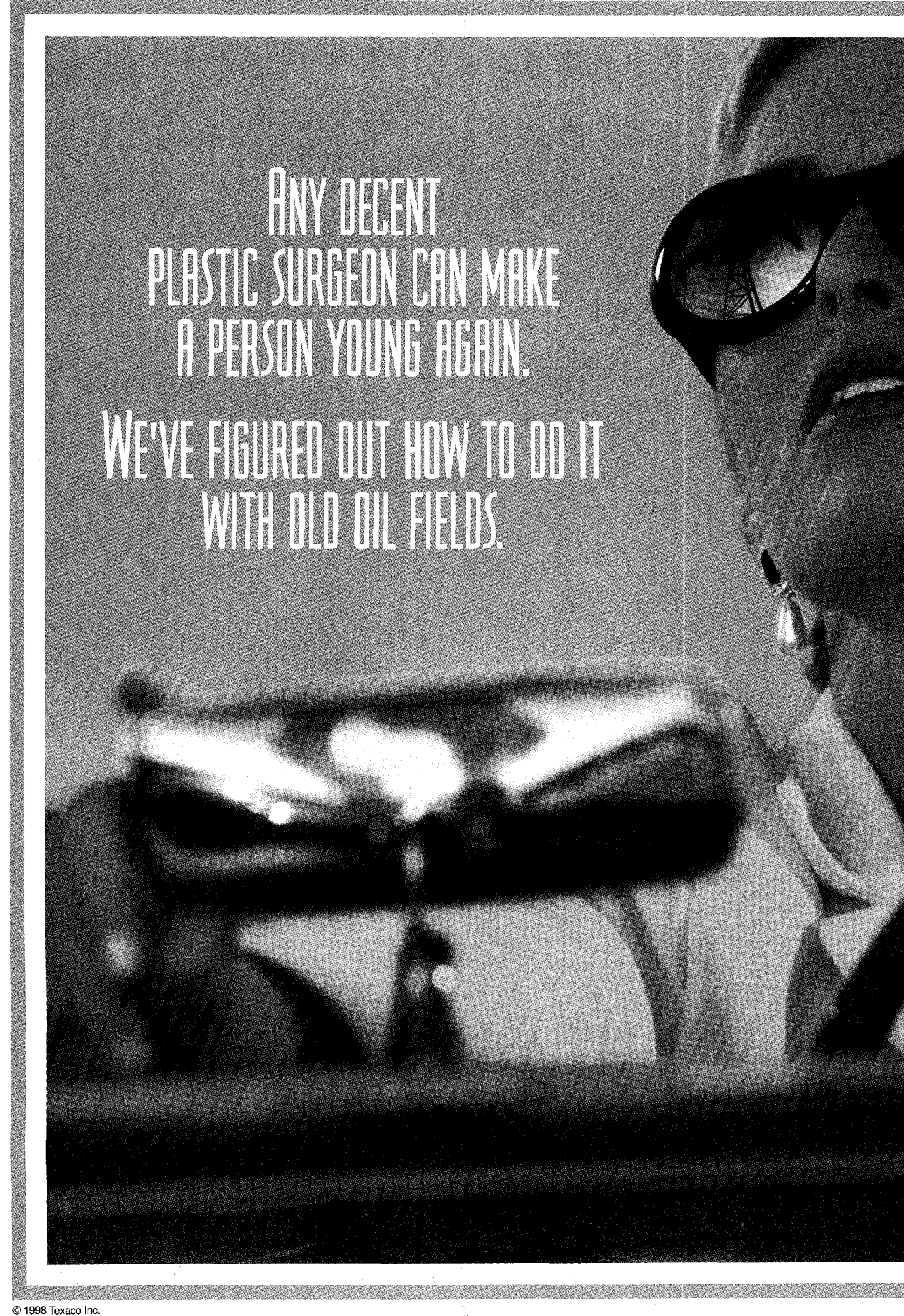
Blame the Islamic
terrorists—not the
government—for
the horrors in Algeria

by Roger Kaplan



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A PERSON YOUNG AGAIN.

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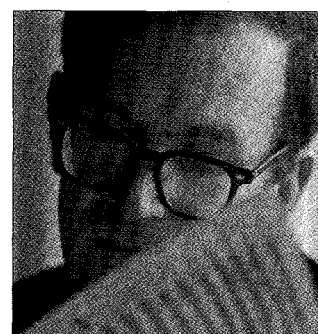
A WORLD OF ENERGY.



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12 Notes & Comment: "Road Rage" Versus Reality

Has the alliterative appeal of the term itself conjured a phantom reality? No data support the existence of road rage as an epidemic, or even as a growing phenomenon. Indeed, the data contradict such findings.

by Michael Fumento

18 Foreign Affairs: The Libel of Moral Equivalence

Observers writing in the Western press imply that the Algerian government is responsible—directly or indirectly—for the recent massacres of villagers by Islamic terrorists. The charge is nonsense, the author argues, and reveals a deep ignorance of Algerian society.

by Roger Kaplan

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The powerful social and economic currents that are irrevocably transforming the United States—and all of North America—are most visible along the Pacific coast. A dynamic mixture of peoples, especially Asians and Latinos, is creating a new "international civilization" with rapidly strengthening ties throughout the world. The American "imperium" that we have known for a century will not collapse the way ancient Rome did, the author writes, but the peaceful molting of American society is no less revolutionary.

by Robert D. Kaplan

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The author of this memoir was born into an haute bourgeois family in the Germany of Kaiser Wilhelm I. She inhabited a world whose special charms and horrors are today nearly lost to living memory. At the center of this stratified social world stood the author's mother—at once prod and obstacle to an intrepid young woman's ambitions.

by Doris Drucker



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The best transportation in Paris is the kind you can take anywhere. And walkers can avail themselves of more good guidebooks than ever.

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When it comes to food preparation, doing things the "old-fashioned way" often means enormous labor and meager payoff. But handmade pesto offers great rewards for not much extra work.

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Cover art by Glenn Mitsui

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77 NORTH WASHINGTON STREET

“WRITING is a sacred calling—but so are gardening, dentistry, and plumbing, so don’t put on airs.” Garrison Keillor, the host of the Public Radio International show *A Prairie Home Companion* and a frequent contributor to *The Atlantic Monthly*, dispensed this observation in an interview posted on our World Wide Web site, known as Atlantic Unbound (www.TheAtlantic.com), while discussing his new novel, *Wobegon Boy*.

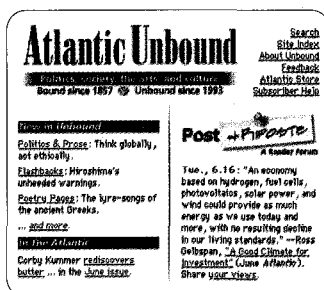
Every few weeks an *Atlantic* author discusses a recent book, article, or short story with Atlantic Unbound editors. Past interviews have featured Paul Theroux, Tobias Wolff, Cynthia Ozick, Jane Smiley, Howard Frank Mosher, Tess Gallagher, James Carroll, Donald Hall, and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead. E. Annie Proulx, the author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Shipping News*, on her predilection for writing from a male point of view: “I grew up with only sisters. I always wanted a brother and I liked the things that men did. For me the invented male character puts the brother I didn’t have into a kind of reality.” Chitra Divakaruni, on the positive effects of being uprooted: “I think being an expatriate is good for writers. Moving away from a home culture often

allows a kind of disjunctive perspective that is very important.” Here is Charles Baxter, asked why his recent short-story collection, *Believers*, contains so much violence: “One of the interesting features about violence is that it’s the meeting point of desire and destruction. It takes you to that boundary where respectability ends and darkness starts to fall, as desire

gets out of hand.” The eminent scientist Edward O. Wilson describing a lifelong infatuation: “I just fell in love with them, and have never regretted it.” He was talking about ants.

Last year the American Society of Magazine Editors, which is responsible for the National Magazine Awards, created a category for new media, and in that year and this, Atlantic Unbound was selected as a finalist for the award for general excellence in new media.

(This year *The Atlantic* was also a finalist in the fiction category and won the award for public-interest reporting.) In addition to regular interviews with *Atlantic* authors, Atlantic Unbound includes the Poetry Pages and Audible Anthology, in which *Atlantic* poets read their poetry; dispatches from far-flung foreign correspondents; and essays that explore art and ideas in the digital age. —THE EDITORS



CONTRIBUTORS

Richard Bausch (“Par”) is the author of many books, including *Rebel Powers* (1993), *The Selected Stories of Richard Bausch* (1996), and *In the Night Season*, which was published this summer.

Peter Davison (“The Burden of James Dickey”) is the poetry editor of *The Atlantic*. His essay on James Dickey and Robert Lowell, “The Difficulties of Being Major,” was published in the October, 1967, *Atlantic*.

Doris Drucker (“Invent Radium or I’ll Pull Your Hair”) has a background in technology and is a registered U.S. Patent agent. She is the founder and chief executive officer of the company RSQ.LLC., which manufactures and markets voice-volume monitors.

Michael Fumento (“Road Rage Versus Reality”) writes about science and health issues. His fourth book, *The Fat of the Land: The Obesity Epidemic and How Overweight Americans Can Help Them-*

selves, was published last year. He is at work on a book about mass hysteria.

Martin Galvin (“Passive Aggressive”) is a poet who lives in Maryland. His poems have appeared in *Poetry*, *The New Republic*, and *The Best American Poetry* 1997.

Robert D. Kaplan (“Travels Into America’s Future”) is a contributing editor of *The Atlantic*. His article in this issue will appear, in somewhat different form, in his new book, *An Empire Wilderness: Travels Into America’s Future*, to be published by Random House in late summer.

Roger Kaplan (“The Libel of Moral Equivalence”), a writer who lives in Paris, is completing a book on the Mitterrand years, and travels often in France’s former African possessions.

Corby Kummer (“Pesto by Hand”) is a senior editor of *The Atlantic* and the author of *The Joy of Coffee* (1995).

Laurie Lamon (“When You Tell Me”) is an assistant professor of English at Whitworth College, in Spokane, Washington.

Her poems have appeared in *The New Republic*, *Poetry Northwest*, and *Primavera*.

Glenn Mitsui (cover art) is an award-winning digital illustrator and a principal of Studio M D, in Seattle. He is one of the founders of Link, an art program for inner-city high school students in Seattle. His work has appeared in *Time*, *Forbes*, *U.S. News & World Report*, and *Newsweek*.

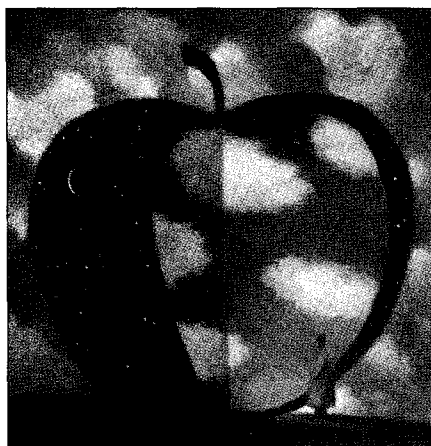
Francine Prose (“Paris at Your Feet”) is a novelist whose *Guided Tours of Hell* (1997), a pair of novellas, was just published in paperback, along with her novel *Big Foot Dreams* (1986).

Allen Shawn (“Craft’s Stravinsky”), a composer, teaches music at Bennington College. A recording of his chamber music was released last fall, and a recording of his piano music will be released this fall.

Steven Stoll (“The Torch and the Hearth”) is an assistant professor of history at Yale University and the author of *The Fruits of Natural Advantage: Making the Industrial Countryside in California*, to be published next month.

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LETTERS

Special Moment

Bill McKibben ("A Special Moment in History," May *Atlantic*) is, I suppose, entitled to make a career of bemoaning the alleged end of nature. However, there ought to be limits on the extent to which he distorts the facts to fit his vision.

To quote McKibben,

For ten years, with heavy funding from governments around the world, scientists launched satellites, monitored weather balloons, studied clouds. Their work culminated in a long-awaited report from the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, released in the fall of 1995. The panel's 2,000 scientists, from every corner of the globe, summed up their findings in this dry but historic bit of understatement: "The balance of evidence suggests that there is a discernible human influence on global climate." That is to say, we are heating up the planet—substantially.

As one of the 2,000 scientists listed, I can assure your readers that the vast majority of us were never asked whether we agreed with anything in the report. Indeed, I had asked not to be listed, but the Intergovernmental Panel, in its eagerness to build numbers, ignored such requests. And note that it is McKibben, in his scientific wisdom, who declares the almost meaningless IPCC statement to be an "understatement," and claims that "we are heating up the planet—substantially." On the contrary, Chapter 8 of the IPCC report takes great pains to point out that the statement has no implications for the magnitude of the effect, is dependent on the assumption that natural variability obtained from models is the same as that in nature, and, even with these caveats, is largely a subjective matter. Indeed, this report was weaker in its support of warming than earlier ones; McKibben quoted about the strongest statement that the IPCC coordinators felt they could get away with.

McKibben also asserts that we have a stormier world today. The IPCC stated: "It is not possible to say whether the frequency, area of occurrence, time of occurrence, mean intensity or maximum intensity of tropical cyclones will change." Recognizing the degree to which even this statement was being abused, the authors recently published a revision: "There is no evidence to suggest any major changes in the area or global location of tropical cyclone genesis in greenhouse conditions." The situation with respect to less severe, extra-tropical storms is similar.

In an extraordinary appeal to the ignorance of his readers, McKibben refers to our new atmosphere as filled with "nitrogen, methane, and carbon." Nitrogen, at about 78 percent, is the major component of the natural atmosphere. By "carbon" I suppose McKibben means carbon dioxide. Currently, at about 360 parts per million, this crucial component hardly fills our atmosphere. However, 360 ppm is greater than the 280 ppm that characterized the pre-industrial atmosphere. Even if we are unable to state whether this could produce significant climate change, we do know (and McKibben acknowledges) that this leads to increased plant growth. What McKibben fails to say is that a modest reduction beyond pre-industrial levels, to 200 ppm, would significantly interfere with life as we know it. This ought to be considered before we permit the EPA to declare carbon dioxide a pollutant.

Richard S. Lindzen

Alfred P. Sloan Professor of Meteorology
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, Mass.

Bill McKibben says, "A gallon of gas weighs about eight pounds. When it's burned in a car, about five and a half pounds of carbon, in the form of carbon dioxide, come spewing out." (Unfortunately, it's worse than that.) "A pint's a pound the world around" refers to water,



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"I wore one when I broke the sound barrier in '47 and I still do today."



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however, not gasoline, which has a much lower density. A gallon of gasoline weighs about 5.9 pounds and is about 84 percent carbon. When completely burned, it yields eighteen pounds of carbon dioxide (and 8.3 pounds of water vapor). That weight of carbon-dioxide gas will occupy a volume of 1,172 gallons.

Dave Bulloch
Sarasota, Fla.

Bill McKibben makes a persuasive case for the discrediting of Malthus. His scenario for the peak of world population in the middle of the next century also seems reasonable. However, when he gets on to the subject of carbon-dioxide emissions, both his logic and his predictive time line come to a screeching halt. Yes, all carboniferous fuels, fossil and otherwise, yield carbon dioxide, and it is building up in the atmosphere. However, there is no way the world will reduce, or even freeze at present levels of, CO₂ emissions. First, the reasonable ambitions of developing nations take them toward Western per capita energy consumption. Second, the capitas are at present still increasing worldwide, in spite of the prospect of leveling fifty years hence.

But third, and most important, the world as a whole has achieved progress and a better life only through consuming more energy per capita. No democratic government is going to be able to stop this evolution. The only reasonable prognosis is more energy consumption, more CO₂ emissions, and increasing population.

What to do? Quit nagging people about using less energy, and—unlike Malthus—look toward the reasonable technological future.

Let's attempt to move away from carboniferous fuels, without sacrificing growth in energy consumption. Wind and solar power are out—there just is not enough to sustain increased energy usage, and energy is the source of a rise in living standards for people anywhere. What prospects remain? Nuclear power is discredited because of highly toxic waste products. Controlled fusion power has been experimented with for more than forty years, with no near likelihood of success. However, *pulse* fusion power has been available since 1952, but neglected for power generation.

In a project called Project Ploughshare, in the late 1950s, Lawrence Radiation

Laboratory developed a good understanding of what was required for safe, radiation-free, underground pulse fusion—nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes. It even published a price list for such devices. A \$1 million non-fission, pure fusion device of forty megatons, triggered underground by a proton beam and surrounded by borax, can safely produce enough heat to power a major city for one year.

I agree with McKibben that unexpected technology ruined Malthus's predictions. I believe that unexpected technology will equally ruin McKibben's predictions.

R. Perry Taylor
Crescent City, Calif.

Bill McKibben replies:

Richard Lindzen and R. Perry Taylor make two responses to the issue of global warming that I've been hearing since I wrote *The End of Nature*, in 1989.

Mr. Lindzen contends that there's probably no problem—an argument he's been making for a decade, even as we've witnessed seven of the warmest years on record. As he states, he's dramatically out of step with the scientific mainstream, which is represented by the IPCC statement. And if he hasn't seen the data on storminess, he should spend more time with the literature—it's not tropical cyclones I was discussing but the recently reported research from U.S. government agencies on severe-storm frequency across this continent, which has increased by a staggering 20 percent.

Mr. Taylor believes that there must be some easy technofix to the problem—for example, nuclear explosions in borax chambers to power cities. In the real world this is of course an unlikely fantasy, useful mainly for illustrating the lengths to which people will go to avoid coming to terms with our use of energy.

Many thanks to Dave Bulloch for the calculations. He is absolutely right about the weight of CO₂ produced; I was just giving the figures for the weight of *carbon* in the CO₂. In either case, it is one of the most relevant numbers for our future.

Bilingual Education

Rosalie Pedalino Porter ("The Case Against Bilingual Education," *May Atlantic*) presents a well-reasoned argument against first-language instruction

for children whose home language is not English. An equally strong argument can be made, however, in favor of such instruction.

Despite Porter's claim to the contrary, substantial basic research shows that providing young children with instruction in their first language allows them to develop literacy skills that transfer to English and to stay on top of school subjects while they develop their English-language skills. We know, for example, that older immigrant children, who arrive with strong first-language literacy skills, easily make the transition to English.

Porter attributes the high dropout rate among Latino students to bilingual education. Both her assumptions and her analysis are flawed. In California most students in bilingual programs speak Spanish, but more Spanish-speaking students are not in bilingual programs. And although language may be a factor, socioeconomic status, family literacy, and family stability are more-consistent predictors of dropping out.

Porter suggests that minority communities support the elimination of bilingual education. California's Proposition 227 was cleverly titled "English for the Children," and played on the indisputable idea that all children should learn English. Few people would have supported the initiative if they understood that it outlaws instruction for children in a language they understand.

Judith Lessow-Hurley
San Jose, Calif.

Bilingual education is no longer an "untried experimental idea." A substantial number of studies have consistently shown that children in properly organized bilingual programs acquire academic English more rapidly than children in all-English programs.

Bilingual programs are not "more concerned with . . . maintaining the ethnic culture of the family than with teaching children English." The many programs I have worked with are keenly aware that the primary goal is the rapid acquisition of English.

Jim Cummins's hypotheses that learning to read in the first language facilitates learning to read in the second and that subject-matter learning in the first language helps to prepare students for learning in English do not "work against the

goals of bilingual education." It is a common observation that children who become good readers in their first language have little trouble learning to read in English. These observations are supported by many studies showing clear correlations between reading ability in the first language and reading ability in the second language. Also, students who learn subject matter through their first language understand much more when they study these subjects in English.

One cannot put the blame on bilingual education for the high Hispanic dropout rate. Fewer than half of Hispanic students in school today are limited-English-proficient, and few of those are in bilingual programs. In California only 15 percent of Hispanic students are in bilingual education. Also, numerous studies show that when background factors such as income, print in the home, and recency of immigration are controlled, differences between Hispanic and majority student-dropout rates are reduced a great deal and often disappear. Furthermore, a controlled study by Herman Curiel, James Rosenthal, and Herbert Richek, of the University of Oklahoma, reported that students in bilingual education dropped out less often than similar children in nonbilingual programs. Bilingual education appears to be the cure for dropping out, not the cause.

Finally, Porter presents the problems of bilingual education as problems not of theory but of practice. Such criticisms are valuable and should be taken seriously. But no study has been done on how widespread poor practice is. All we have is a few very well publicized cases. Poor practice should be changed. But this is insufficient grounds for dropping bilingual education. If we found cases of poor algebra teaching, would we drop algebra from the curriculum?

Stephen Krashen
Professor of Education
University of Southern California
Malibu, Calif.

Rosalie Pedalino Porter replies:

The arguments in these letters are, of course, familiar. The argument most frequently expressed is that limited-English students will do better academically if they first learn to read and write in their native language. I, too, believed this when I started my career as a Spanish/English bilingual teacher, in 1974.

Five years of experience in a well-funded program staffed with competent teachers taught me otherwise.

But I do not base my disillusionment with native-language teaching programs only on my experience as a teacher and my ten years as a program director. Although research on bilingual education is rightly criticized even by advocates as of generally poor quality, we do recognize a few reports as reliable. The prestigious National Research Council last year published a thirty-year review of bilingual education, conducted by reputable scholars known to favor bilingual programs. Two of its conclusions were: "It is clear that many children first learn to read in a second language without serious negative consequences," and "We do not yet know whether there will be long-term advantages or disadvantages to initial literacy instruction in the primary language versus English." The findings of the National Research Council contradict the popular notion of the superiority of bilingual education and confirm the earlier conclusions of the U.S. Department of Education's Baker-DeKanter study of 1981, which reported, "The case for the effectiveness of transitional bilingual education is so weak that exclusive reliance on this instructional method is clearly not justified."

The unacceptably high dropout rate for students of Spanish-speaking background and the fact that it has not shown signs of improvement in two decades cannot be attributed to education programs alone. Immigrant, migrant, and refugee children from families in poverty, often with undereducated parents, facing problems of adjustment to a new land or the trauma of moving frequently from place to place, are more likely to have difficulty in making consistent academic progress and in being able to complete high school. Often these children are needed to help support the family by going to work as soon as possible. Yet I am convinced that we can help matters greatly by at least following the legal mandate of removing the language barrier to an equal education as early and as effectively as possible.

Editors' Note

The photograph that appeared on page 57 of the July issue was miscredited. The credit should have read: Larry Mayer/Gamma Liaison.

A New Tour Book

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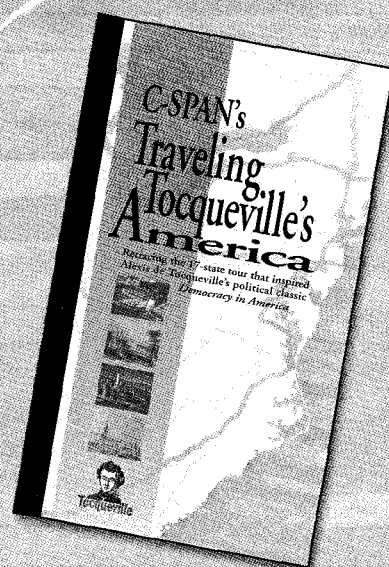
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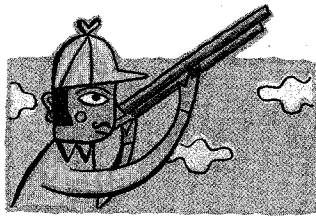


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THE AUGUST ALMANAC

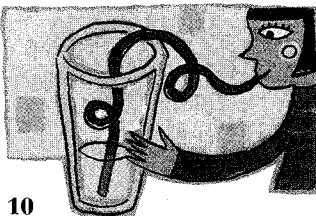


Food

Squirrel-hunting season opens this month in several states, including Kentucky—where in recent years a number of diagnosed or suspected cases of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, a degenerative brain disorder in the same family as mad-cow disease, have been tentatively linked to the regional practice of eating squirrel brains (often scrambled with eggs or made into a stew). From 1993 to 1997 doctors diagnosed 11 cases of CJD in rural west Kentucky; all the victims had a history of eating squirrel brains. The Kentucky Wildlife Commission is now testing brain samples from 60 squirrels; doctors have issued a warning against eating the brains of any animal for the time being.

Environment

August 6: the Environmental Protection Agency will issue a final rule requiring all community water systems—the source of water for most U.S. households—to provide their customers with annual reports on the quality of their drinking water. In most cases the reports will be mailed to customers. They must include information on any contaminants detected; the probable sources of contamination; and, when the level of a contaminant exceeds EPA standards, the health risks of drinking water containing that substance. The first reports, covering water quality over the coming twelve months, are due by October of 1999.



Government

This month philanthropy-minded postal customers can elect to pay eight cents extra for a special first-class stamp, with the net proceeds going to breast-cancer research. Increased-rate stamps, called semipostals, have long been sold in a number of countries; this is their U.S. debut. Also this month is the expiration of the 1988 Civil Liberties Act, which guaranteed reparations—\$20,000 per person—to Japanese-Americans interned during the Second World War. More than 81,000 claimants have been compensated. The government has also pledged payments of \$5,000 each to the 2,200 Japanese-Latin Americans who were forcibly brought to this country and interned, allegedly because the U.S. government viewed them as a security threat and because it needed people of Japanese ancestry to exchange for U.S. civilians held by Japan. The promised compensation was announced after several in this group, which was excluded from the reparations law because its members were not U.S. citizens or permanent residents at the time of internment, filed suit.



Demographics

Couples wishing to start a family might have better-than-average success this month—at least if they are French. A study released last year by INSERM, France's institute for medical research, found that both the quantity and the quality of spermatozoa in 100,000 samples from Frenchmen peaked during August and February. The researchers had a ready explanation for the February peak, positing a drop in sexu-

al activity during cold weather; less-frequent sex allows higher concentrations of sperm to build up. The peak in August—a time when couples are presumably more active sexually, and when sperm counts in other studies have been low, probably because heat slows sperm production—is more surprising. Some scientists see it as lingering evidence that human beings once had seasonal breeding patterns, as other mammals do. And indeed, records pre-dating the widespread use of modern contraception suggest that birth rates were highest during November and April, a finding roughly consistent with conception during February and August.



Health & Safety

This month an international team of scientists will exhume the bodies of six victims of the 1918 flu pandemic from a cemetery on the island of Spitsbergen, Norway. If, as is hoped, the corpses have remained frozen over the years (Spitsbergen lies within the Arctic Circle, and the bodies are thought to be in deep graves), researchers may be able to recover and analyze fragments of the virus that caused the flu, which killed approximately 20 million people worldwide but is little understood. U.S. molecular pathologists are already trying to map the virus's genetic structure, working from tissue harvested from three North American victims of the flu, and samples of the European strain should aid the process. Such efforts could lead to a vaccine against any future version of the 1918 flu and to a better understanding of how influenza mutates to evade the body's immune system.

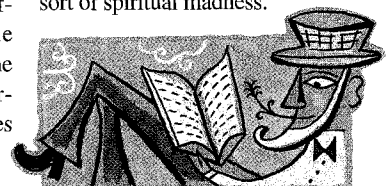


The Skies

This month early risers will be rewarded more than once with the predawn conjunction of Mars and Venus: on August 3rd the planets form a tight group with the star Delta Geminorum, and on the 4th and 5th they are at their closest, with the twin stars Castor and Pollux just to the north. August 7: Full Moon, also known this month as the Grain or Sturgeon Moon. 11-12 and 12-13: the Perseid meteor shower peaks. Viewing will be best before moonrise and just before dawn.

75 Years Ago

Philip Cabot, writing in the August, 1923, issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*: "No one will deny that relaxation and amusement are necessary for us all; but . . . compare our forms of amusement with those of fifty years ago. . . . The classics of our grandfathers are pronounced dull and slow to-day and things with 'more snap to them' . . . have taken their place. . . . Today the woods and fields are deserted, except for the hunter, strung with the thirst to kill, while ten million motor-cars whirl us at blinding speed, over crowded thoroughfares on which we dodge our neighbors with incredible agility and fierce irritation. . . . These things . . . have the earmarks of stimulants, not sedatives; of the fear of life, rather than the love of it. Foreign observers have often remarked . . . that Americans work hard and hurry over their play. But this is not hurry; it is hysteria—a sort of spiritual madness."





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"Road Rage" Versus Reality

*A media coinage that rests more on the infectious appeal
of alliteration than on the weight of evidence*

"ROAD WARRIORS: AGGRESSIVE DRIVERS TURN FREEWAYS INTO FREE-FOR-ALLS," read the headline of an Associated Press article in the *Chicago Tribune* last year. "Armed with everything from firearms to Perrier bottles to pepper spray and eggs," the text began, "America's drivers are taking frustrations out on each other in startling numbers." *Newsweek* warned, "ROAD RAGE: WE'RE DRIVEN TO DESTRUCTION." In January of this year *Time* declared, "It's high noon on the country's streets and highways. This is road recklessness, auto anarchy, an epidemic of wanton carman-ship." Earlier *USA Today* had spoken of "AN 'EPIDEMIC' OF AGGRESSIVE DRIVING," and the *Washington Times* also reported, "HIGHWAY VIOLENCE SAID TO BE SPREADING LIKE AN EPIDEMIC."

The media couldn't talk enough about the awful carnage. Even a piece by the columnist William Safire, on the death of Princess Diana, was titled "ROAD RAGE IN PARIS." By July of last year matters had become so serious that Representative Tom Petri, of Wisconsin, called hearings before the House Subcommittee on Surface Transportation, which he chairs. "It's a national disaster," Jeff Neligan, a committee staff member, said. "It's making our roads some of the most dangerous places in the country."

By the end of May there were about 200 citations on the Nexis media database that used both "epidemic" and "road rage." In fact, there's been a tremendous prolif-

eration of the term "road rage" itself. It was, apparently, coined in 1988, and appeared in up to three stories yearly until 1994, when it began to catch on. After twenty-seven mentions that year the numbers escalated sharply, to almost 500 in 1995, more than 1,800 in 1996, and more than 4,000 in 1997.

Headlines notwithstanding, there was not—there is not—the least statistical or other scientific evidence of more-aggressive driving on our nation's roads. Indeed, accident, fatality, and injury rates have been edging down. There is no evidence that "road rage" or an aggressive-driving "epidemic" is anything but a media invention, inspired primarily by something as simple as a powerful alliteration: road rage. The

term was presumably based on "roid rage," referring to sudden violent activity by people on steroids. The term, and the alleged epidemic, were quickly popularized by lobbying groups, politicians, opportunistic therapists, publicity-seeking safety agencies, and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The most frequently cited evidence that Americans have been killing and maiming one another at record rates was a study from the American Automobile Association Foundation for Traffic Safety, released in March of last year. More than 260 references to the AAA study soon showed up on Nexis. "ROAD RAGE: UGLY INCREASE IN ACTS OF FREEWAY FURY," from the *San Francisco Chronicle*, was a representative headline. The

by Michael Fumento

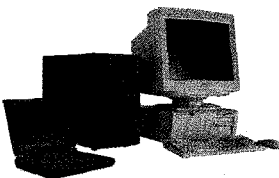


Illustration by Stephen Kroninger

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study, however, was quite possibly a measure more of perception than of reality.

To conduct it, AAA commissioned Mizell & Co., of Bethesda, Maryland, a consulting firm that collects criminal statistics. The study purported to show an increase of about 60 percent in what it termed "aggressive driving" from 1990 through 1996 (if the rate applicable partway through 1996 held constant). Although Mizell never used the inflammatory term "road rage," he did pour rhetorical fuel on the fire, saying, "What used to be just two people screaming at each other is now one per-

*A government safety
official candidly
admitted that "no data"
indicate an actual
increase in aggressive
driving.*

son losing it and pulling the trigger."

The study has numerous problems. Consider that the 218 deaths Mizell claimed were directly attributable to aggressive driving occurred in a period during which 290,000 people died in traffic accidents. He identified 12,610 people whose injuries were attributable to aggressive driving out of a total of 23 million people injured by vehicles. And the survey was hardly scientific. Rather, Mizell simply drew on stories from about thirty newspapers, reports from sixteen police departments, and insurance-company claim reports. He didn't even demonstrate that the changes in his numbers from year to year were statistically significant. Couldn't an increase in the number of incidents reported simply reflect increased awareness of and publicity for aggressive driving, along with an explosion in the use of the term "road rage"? Mizell essentially dismissed this idea both when I interviewed him recently ("We would have picked up on this") and in his report, where he called the influence of such factors "almost certainly not significant."

David Murray, the director of research at the Statistical Assessment Service, in Washington, D.C., doesn't buy it. Once a phenomenon picks up a label, he explains, the label tends to be applied to more and more things. "We find it everywhere," Murray says. "There has always been a degree of aggression while driving, but what did we used to call it? Nothing. Now that we have a name, we look for things that seem to be similar and build a pathology." Stuart Kirk, a professor in the School of Public Policy and Social Research at the University of California at Los Angeles, concurs. "You get an epidemic by the mere coining of a term," he says. What's more, Murray suggests that Mizell's sources—reporters, police departments, and insurance adjusters—influence one another.

Circularity also affects polls indicating that people believe that aggressive driving is on the rise, which are often cited by safety advocates as evidence that it is. One poll, taken in August of last year, found that 74 percent of Americans surveyed believed that other people were driving more aggressively than they had been five years earlier. A few months later another poll showed that Americans considered AIDS to be one of the nation's top two health problems, even though it was actually the No. 8 killer and AIDS deaths and the number of new cases are declining. Those being polled were merely reacting to an image of AIDS with which they had been presented.

USA Today in May of last year quoted Bob Wall, a traffic-safety coordinator for the Fairfax County, Virginia, police department who speaks on the issue around the country, as saying that aggressive driving is "becoming a national epidemic." Powerful words. "But how do you know this?" I asked Wall. "You can talk to just about any police agency in the country," he said. "Every time I go somewhere they are talking about aggressive driving."

I asked Wall if he had any evidence beyond what the police thought. He referred me to an employee in the Traffic Safety Program at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, whose comments have to go without attribution because the NHTSA press office wouldn't let her speak on the record. She candidly admitted that although aggressive driving is "a newly emerging issue,"

"no data" indicate an actual increase in it. "Not here and not anywhere," she emphasized. "Aggressive driving" is "just a term," she explained, with "no fixed definition." "There's no law against anything called 'aggressive driving,' and therefore no tally to look at, as with speeding tickets," she said. "You have to have something to mark."

■ ■ ■

If road rage were increasingly a problem, shouldn't it show up in an increase in highway fatalities? Political appointees at the NHTSA—as opposed to those who actually collect and analyze the data—claim that it does. Ricardo Martinez, the head of the NHTSA, told Petri's subcommittee, "After years of steady decline, the total number of highway deaths increased slightly in each of the last four years." He added that in 1996 there were 41,907 highway fatalities in the country, an increase from the year before.

But those numbers don't take into account additional drivers or miles driven. During the period in which the AAA survey found a 60 percent increase in aggressive-driving accidents, deaths on American highways actually declined, to 1.7 per 100 million vehicle miles traveled. In 1987, the year before "road rage" first appeared on Nexis, the rate was 2.4. This decline is not explained merely by the greater use of seat belts and air bags. In 1987 there were 2.8 passenger-car crashes per 100 million miles traveled. In 1996 the figure was only 2.0. For both these categories the numbers are now the lowest they have been since the NHTSA began keeping records.

As for injuries, in 1990, the first year of the Mizell data, there were 151 per 100 million miles traveled. By 1996 the number had slipped to 141. Preliminary NHTSA data for 1997 show that motor-vehicle deaths, crashes, and injuries all declined in absolute terms, despite an increase in vehicle miles traveled of about two percent.

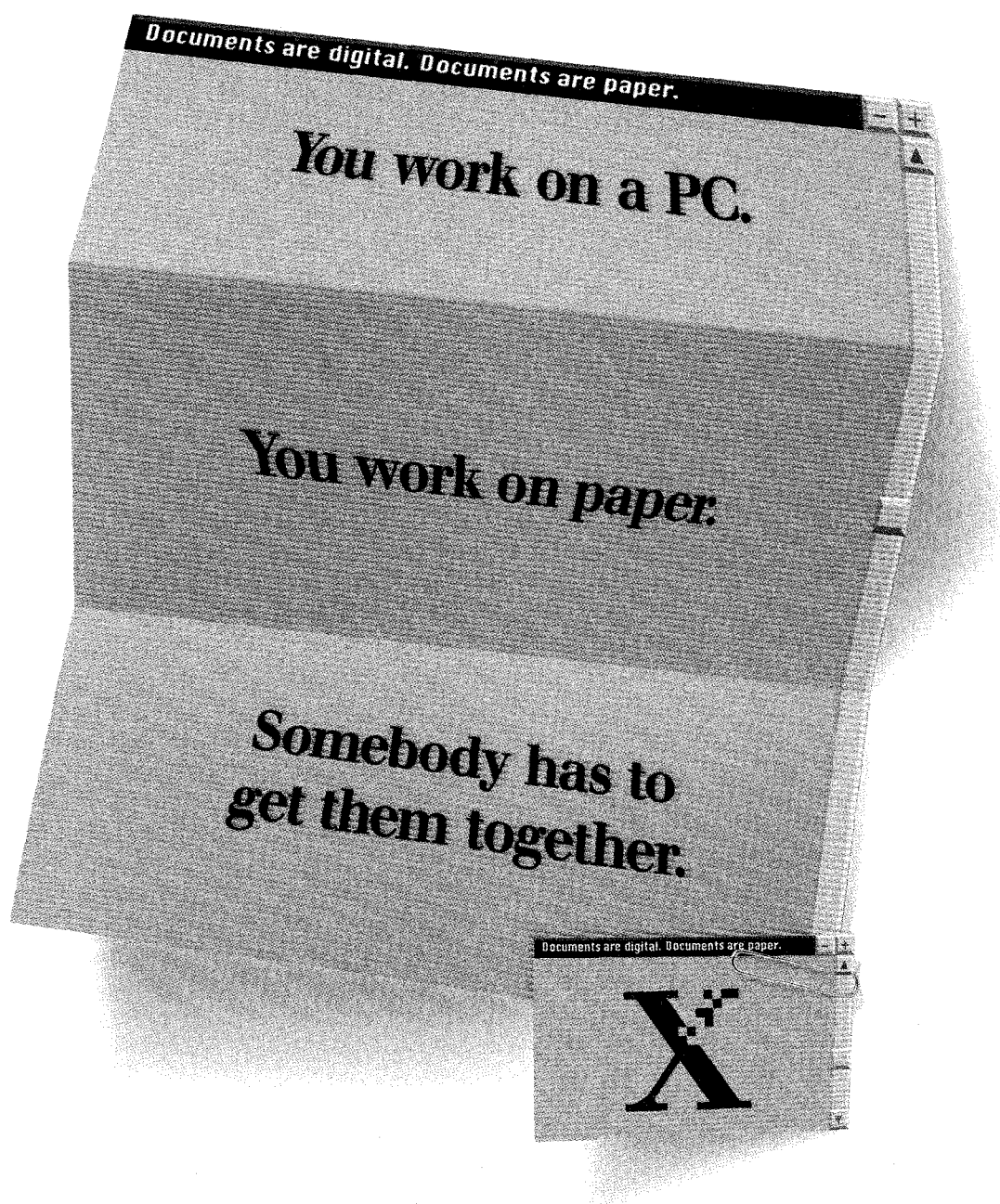
None of this is proof that no increase has occurred in the number of deaths or injuries attributable to road rage. After all, improvements in auto safety may have more than compensated for increases in road-rage casualties. But it's clear that authorities are being disingenuous when they claim that casualty data are worsening.

Still, aggressive driving does cause



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some accidents. At Petri's subcommittee hearings Martinez claimed that "one third of these crashes and about two thirds of the resulting fatalities can be attributed to behavior associated with aggressive driving." The media accepted this claim without question: "TEMPER CITED AS CAUSE OF 28,000 ROAD DEATHS A YEAR" (*The New York Times*); "TWO-THIRDS OF ALL AUTO DEATHS BLAMED ON STRESSED-OUT, AGGRESSIVE DRIVERS" (the *San Francisco Examiner*); "SEETHING MOTORISTS MAKE CARS WEAPONS" (the *Albany Times Union*). But was there any truth to the figure of 28,000? Liz Neblett,

If road rage were a problem, shouldn't it show up in an increase in highway fatalities? But fatality rates have been edging down.

a spokeswoman for the NHTSA, responded quite candidly. "We don't have hard numbers," she said, "but aggressive driving is almost everything. It includes weaving in and out of traffic, driving too closely, flashing your lights—all kinds of stuff. Drinking, speeding, almost everything you can think of, can be boiled down to aggressive driving behaviors." With such a broad definition, Martinez could conceivably label virtually every accident as the result of aggressive driving.

■ ■ ■

Originally "road rage" meant one driver acting against another. No longer. By last year it had come to include a Washington, D.C., bicyclist who shot the driver of a car who ran into him, and a Scottish couple who threatened a driver with a knife after his BMW ran over their dog. The definition of "road rage" now requires neither a road nor rage. One newspaper published a story about developing pristine land under the headline "ROAD RAGE HAS TAKEN TOLL ON WILDERNESS," and *USA Today* discussed people angry about their in-

surance premiums under the headline "DRIVERS FEEL 'ROAD RAGE' OVER HIGH INSURANCE RATES."

Driving behavior that was once called something else is now called road rage. Thus a British insurance firm recently conducted a poll in which, it claims, "almost one in two state they have either been a victim of or a witness to an act of 'Road Rage.'" But the primary road-rage act was "verbal abuse," the second largest category was "hand gestures," and the third was "intimidatory driving." Attacks on vehicles or people were rarely reported.

The shortage of evidence that aggressive driving is increasing hardly keeps some "experts" from providing reasons why it is. John Larson, a psychiatrist at Yale University, in his testimony before Petri's subcommittee divided aggressive driving—or "vigilante behavior," as he called it—into four degrees, with "road rage" the highest and "highway madness" just beneath it. One of the causes Larson listed for road rage was sports—being "strongly imbued with the sports model, either from high school, college, or professional sports; and from identification with sports heroes, who become introjected models for behavior." Another lay in the make of the car itself. "Often aggressive drivers will 'deduce' the motivation of the other driver from the make of his car," Larson told the subcommittee. "BMW's, pickup trucks, sports cars, or off-road vehicles may be given aggressive motivations. . . . Thus aggressive drivers react to the 'personality' they associate with the make and model of the vehicle, not the person inside it." Larson even indicted "Ford Tough" and similar advertising slogans.

Arnold Nerenberg, a clinical psychologist in Whittier, California, invokes evolution. "This competitiveness on the road is similar to what you see in all social mammals," he told one reporter. "There is this 'I will not let you get ahead of me.'" Nerenberg is the nation's expert on the causes of road rage—or, perhaps, the guru. He dubs himself "America's Road-Rage Therapist," and has his own Web page (www.roadrage.com). He has testified before the Petri subcommittee, has appeared on the *CBS Evening News*, *CNN*, *Fox News*, *The Today Show*, *48 Hours*, and *Johnnie Cochran*, and has been featured in *Newsweek*, *USA Today*,

U.S. News & World Report, *People*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and various women's magazines. Nexis shows more than 100 citations for him on the subject of road rage. His *Overcoming Road Rage* can be ordered in book, audiotape, or video format. Originally Nerenberg sold it through a PR firm, using the toll-free number 1-888-ROADRAGE. But the firm has since folded, and now he sells it directly from his office, without benefit of the catchy phone number. Personal sessions can be arranged with him, during which, among other things, according to the Web magazine *Salon*, he accompanies his patients in the car and throws "screaming fits to demonstrate how crazed and unattractive they appear."

Nerenberg says that occasionally expressing anger behind the wheel is normal. "What's abnormal," he told *Salon*, "is when it goes beyond muttering to screaming and other aggressive actions." But to hear him tell it, *not* having road rage is abnormal. He claims that more than half of drivers have "road-rage disorder." Sometimes he describes this as "basically a maladaptive reaction to an identifiable psycho-social stressor that interferes with social functioning." When he wants to be understood, he calls it "one driver expressing anger at another driver . . . at least twice a year."

Nerenberg has his own road-rage statistics. During a CNN interview he said, "Fifty-three percent of our population has a road-rage disorder," and 1.78 billion "episodes" occur each year. "That's based on the fact that on average drivers manifest road rage twenty-seven times a year, and we have about a hundred and twenty-five million cars on the road." Nerenberg considers road rage a "mental disorder and a social disease," and proposes that it be included in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* of the American Psychiatric Association.

■ ■ ■

While roads become slightly safer each year, traffic accidents remain a leading cause of death in this country, and disproportionately so among the young. But the fuss over aggressive driving and road rage distracts us from those behaviors that could be controlled with relatively minor investments, greatly reducing deaths and injuries. In recent years Americans have waged a fairly success-

ful campaign against drunken driving. But a poll in March of last year, commissioned by AAA Potomac, showed that 48 percent of those surveyed identified "aggressive drivers" as their chief concern, whereas only 28 percent so identified drunk drivers. What happens to the drunken-driving campaigns now that road rage has become our greatest fear?

Clearly a major factor in American road deaths and injuries is that it is ridiculously easy in this country to get a driver's license—to drive a couple of tons of metal capable of going more than 100 miles per hour. Vehicle crashes are by far the leading cause of death for those aged fifteen to twenty-four. According to NHTSA data for 1995, drivers aged twenty and under suffered sixty-seven fatal accidents per 100,000 licenses. For those twenty-one to twenty-four years old the rate dropped to forty-seven, and for those twenty-five to thirty-four it was thirty-three. In the 1960s and 1970s virtually all high schools had some form of drivers' education. According to AAA, it has been eliminated in about half the schools.

One behavior that apparently *has* become truly epidemic is the running of red lights. Drivers who run red lights cause a quarter of a million traffic crashes a year, according to a study by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety that was released in May. The Department of Transportation has determined that crashes at stoplights increased by 14 percent in the period 1992–1996, with the number of fatal crashes at stoplights increasing by 19 percent. A handful of cities are installing cameras at stoplights. And it's working. During the first six months after cameras were mounted at four San Francisco intersections, the number of drivers who ran red lights there dropped by 42 percent. Although some (including members of the California Assembly who fought unsuccessfully to stop the expansion of that state's three-year experiment with cameras) say these smack of Big Brother, the cameras take only single shots of the license plates of violators. A Harris poll in May found that Americans favor them by two to one. How many more lives could be saved and injuries prevented if we focused on behaviors that cause accidents, rather than on media creations like road rage? ☼

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The Libel of Moral Equivalence

Algeria's struggle against a totalitarian movement is being weakened by Western insinuations that state-run death squads, rather than Islamic terrorists, are responsible for the slaughter of whole villages

IN the early hours of January 3 of this year a band of armed men penetrated Had T'Chekala, a group of hamlets in a mountainous rural region about 150 miles west of Algiers, and killed almost everybody there.

When word first got out, spokesmen at the Interior Ministry, which oversees the Algerian police, said that perhaps fifty to eighty dead had been discovered to that point, and help was on the way for the survivors, whose homes had been looted and burned or otherwise destroyed. The government assigned blame for the attack to the GIA, the

Armed Islamic Group (or "Groups," as is often said to underscore that there are various bands and that their leaders, who call themselves emirs, act without reference to a central command). Within a day or two the capital's major papers had sent reporters into the rugged hills leading up to Had T'Chekala; they

by Roger Kaplan

found that the government had underestimated the extent of the catastrophe and overstated its ability to deliver relief. The reporter from *El Watan*, the nation's Francophone paper of record, sent in an estimate of 150 killed, while his colleague at *Le Matin* published a count twice as

high. The Arabic-language press offered similar revisions.

Details began to emerge: decapitations, babies thrown into ovens, missing girls and young women, presumably kidnapped into sexual slavery. The massacre at Had T'Chekala was the latest in a series of attacks of this nature that had been occurring since the previous summer. Newspaper editorials and orators from the opposition benches of the National Popular Assembly (elected in June of last year) demanded explanations: Why were villages like Had T'Chekala so vulnerable? What did the government propose to do? There was, as well, pressure from abroad. As early as last October voices had been raised in the French press calling for an international commission of inquiry. They were seconded by the U.S. State Department and by officials of the European Union.

Massacres have been taking place for years. In early 1993 there was a rash of incidents in which gunmen entered the homes of civil servants—policemen in particular—and killed everyone in sight. Later that year Tahar Djaout, at thirty-nine one of Algeria's most promising young writers, and Mahfoud Boucebc, a leading psychiatrist, were assassinated within a few days of each other, launching a war against the cultural and scientific elite. Journalists became favorite targets—both senior figures in the Algerian press, such as Said Mekbel, a well-respected and widely read columnist for *Le Matin*, and beginners, such as Khadidja Dahmani, on the staff of *Echourouk el Arabi*, a popular Arab-language weekly until its demise this year, which was by no means hostile to religion. To date some fifty-nine journalists and a number of other media workers have been assassinated, and although no violence against the profession has been reported since 1996, many journalists are still living semi-clandestinely, changing their residences often. But the spectacular murders of individuals who could easily be identified by profession did not overshadow the fact that vehicles were being stopped on highways and their occupants killed, schools

Aftermath of a car-bomb explosion in Algiers, 1995



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Many Algerians realized that if the leading Islamic party had come to power in 1992, Algeria's burgeoning democracy would be ruined.

were being burned and schoolteachers murdered in front of their students—sometimes with them. By the time the massacres in villages captured the world's attention, last summer, reliable estimates placed the number of people killed in Algeria since 1992 at 60,000 to 100,000. This total of course included thousands of terrorists and, according to groups such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, a number of people suspected of being terrorists.

It is often said that the terrorism of armed fundamentalist groups began after the army canceled the parliamentary elections scheduled for January of 1992, in which the Islamic Salvation Front was about to best the ruling National Liberation Front and the secular opposition, collectively known as democrats. The implication is that a secularist military blocked the legitimate ascension to power of a religiously inspired party democratically favored by a majority of the voters. This position was implied in the initial coolness of the U.S. State Department toward the regime that emerged from the aborted elections of 1992 and in repeated offers by the French to facilitate some kind of national conference at which the parties to the conflict could discuss their differences. The most controversial—and to many Algerians, libelous—critique of the regime's legitimacy came with unsubstantiated suggestions, half spoken in European media and political circles, that the government was behind the village massacres. This went well beyond the accusations made in Algeria that the security agencies, and the army in particular, failed to provide villagers with adequate protection.

Two other famous national electoral events have punctuated this decade of

violence. In November of 1995 a retired general, Liamine Zeroual, ran for President and won, with 61 percent of the vote, against an Islamic candidate, Mahfoud Nahnah, and the democrats' Said Saadi. And in June of last year a newly formed governing party, the National Democratic Union, which supported the President and a program of gradual institutional and economic reform, won a plurality in the long-delayed legislative elections and formed a coalition government with the National Liberation Front and Nahnah's party. The Islamic Salvation Front had been banned in 1992 by the provisional High Council of State, headed by Mohamed Boudiaf, a hero of the independence war who had broken with the National Liberation Front. (Boudiaf was murdered on June 29 of that year.)

RECALLING my conversations with witnesses to past massacres, I was as shocked as anyone else when I heard about the carnage in January, the holy month of Ramadan. But these atrocities did not come out of the blue;

town called Ben Talha, scarcely an hour's drive from my hotel in downtown Algiers. A few weeks later a hundred more were slaughtered a few miles away, in a hamlet called Rais. What seemed of greatest interest to the international press was rumors about who was behind the killings. One suggestion was that the army had elements within it, possibly not even rogue elements, that were functioning as death squads, liquidating villages that had been recruiting grounds and hiding places for insurrectionary bands.

The Algerians acknowledged that in certain areas law and order had broken down completely, with local toughs, taking advantage of the civil-defense movement, requesting arms from the state and then using them for their own purposes—namely racketeering and vendettas.

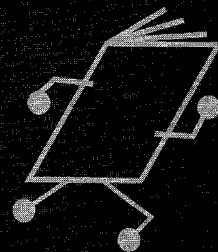
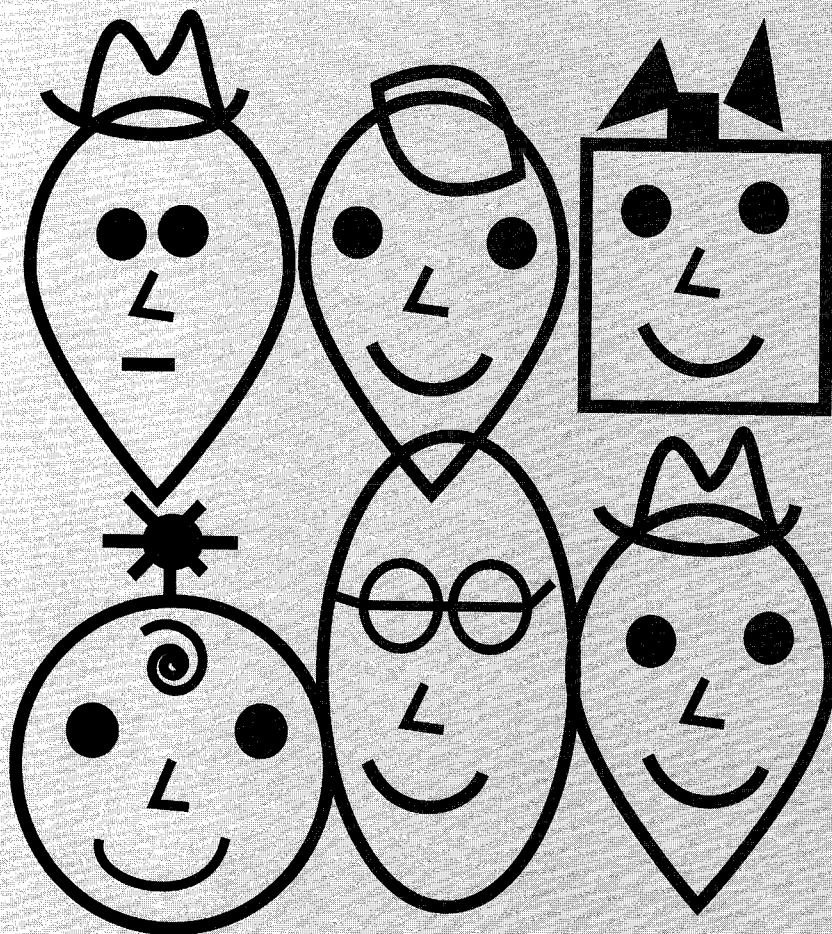
The U.S. State Department, traditionally low-key on the subject of Algeria, late last year took up the idea of an international commission of inquiry, with the result that the American ambassador in Algiers, Cameron Hume, was summoned to the Foreign Ministry and told



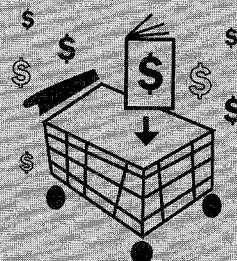
Survivors of a terrorist attack in the Mitidja Valley last January

there was a history here. In the late spring of last year a little boy in a village near Blida, a city south of Algiers, told me that from the floor of the bedroom where he was hiding, he had watched the level of blood rise as his family was murdered. Fifty people were murdered in one ghastly night last August in a

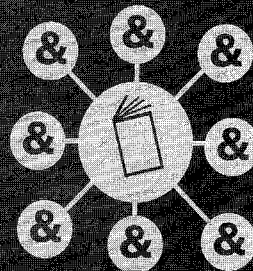
in no uncertain terms that his colleagues in Washington were out of line. Embarrassed by Algeria's adamant reaction, Americans and Europeans—in the press no less than in official circles—dropped the idea. Instead, after the January massacre the EU sent a ministerial delegation to discuss with Algerian officials



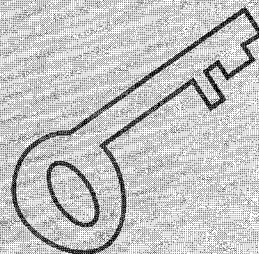
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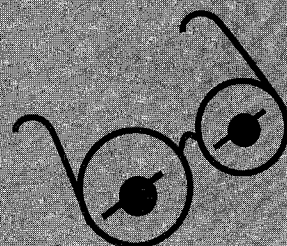
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ways of cooperating in the fight against international terrorism. Hume's predecessor, Ronald Neumann, went before a congressional subcommittee in early February and said that there had been reports of excesses by individual members of the Algerian security forces. However, he stated, "I do not believe that there is a government policy of sending out death squads." He added that in a country about the size of the United States east of the Mississippi, it was self-evident that a relatively small army could not be everywhere.

THE most likely explanation of what was going on did not seem to interest anyone. The emirs and their drugged acolytes—drugged on evil brews of false

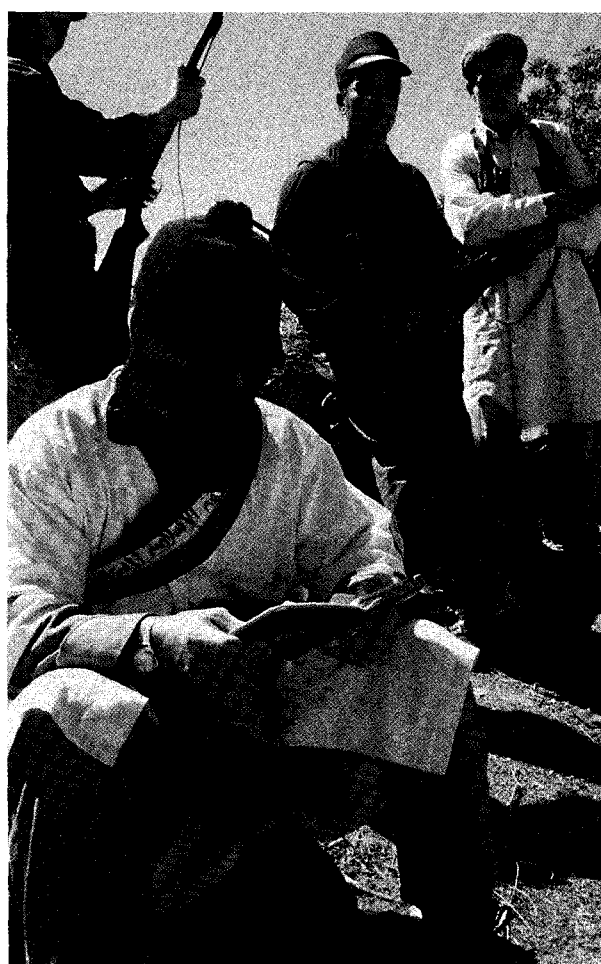
commanders of the Army of Islamic Salvation, the armed wing of the Islamic Salvation Front, were apparently persuaded by repeated battering by the security forces, along with an official government policy of *rahma* (forgiveness for surrender), to lay down their arms last October. However, the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), which had, according to reliable accounts, broken off from the Islamic Salvation Front in 1994 or 1995, was bent on either victory or death. Last summer and fall the GIA focused on the region where it was strongest, the valley of the Mitidja, just south of Algiers. As army sweeps in the valley began to pay off, security specialists surmise, the GIA sent its death commandos into regions where they were not expected.

Its purpose was revenge: the villagers, who might at one time have shown insurrectionary bands some support, if only out of fear, were now recalcitrant. Moreover, since the summer's surrenders any village from which the Army of Islamic Salvation had recruited young men was now marked in the minds of the GIA as a nest of traitors deserving no quarter.

FOR ten years Algeria has been undergoing a dramatic evolution, away from the authoritarian state imposed by the victors in the long war of independence against France (1954–1962) and toward liberal democracy. Until 1988, for example, *El Moudjahid*, which

acceptance of economic and social policies, rather than to champion their interests. In the late 1980s, however, Algeria developed an independent press, and trade unions unaffiliated with the regime often led strikes against government policies. A reformer in the teachers' union, Abdelhak Benhamouda, seized control of the General Union in 1986, and later renewed historical ties with the U.S. AFL-CIO. Political parties were created, along with other institutions that a free society takes for granted—women's-rights groups, for instance. The nationalized economy was being transformed to make room for a private sector.

At the same time, Algerian society was under attack by a militant political movement flying the banner of Islam. From 1992 to 1995 especially, it seemed that the attack might succeed. Algeria was assumed in many circles to be "the next Iran." German Chancellor Helmut Kohl warned of an aggressive, militantly Islamic movement on the southern littoral of the Mediterranean (an hour's flight from many European cities); U.S. policy officials, mindful of the U.S. experience with Tehran, considered how best to avoid being cast again in a satanic role. The State Department quietly urged the regime to seek a "compromise solution," while the Army commissioned a specialist from the Rand Corporation to write a monograph downplaying the likely radicalism of "the next fundamentalist state." In France politicians on the right warned that a takeover of Algeria by the Islamic Salvation Front would have deleterious consequences not only for French-Algerian relations but also for the human rights of ordinary Algerians. But politicians on the left, including the current Prime Minister, Lionel Jospin, and the humanitarian activist Bernard Kouchner, France's Health Minister, condemned the interruption of the electoral process in 1992. Many in France hoped for a more nuanced approach to even the most radical Islamists, arguing at least implicitly for their inclusion in the political process. (Ironically, in their own country Jospin and many others in the Socialist Party have sought through legislation to circumscribe the appeal of Jean-Marie Le Pen's National Front in an attempt to curb its power.)



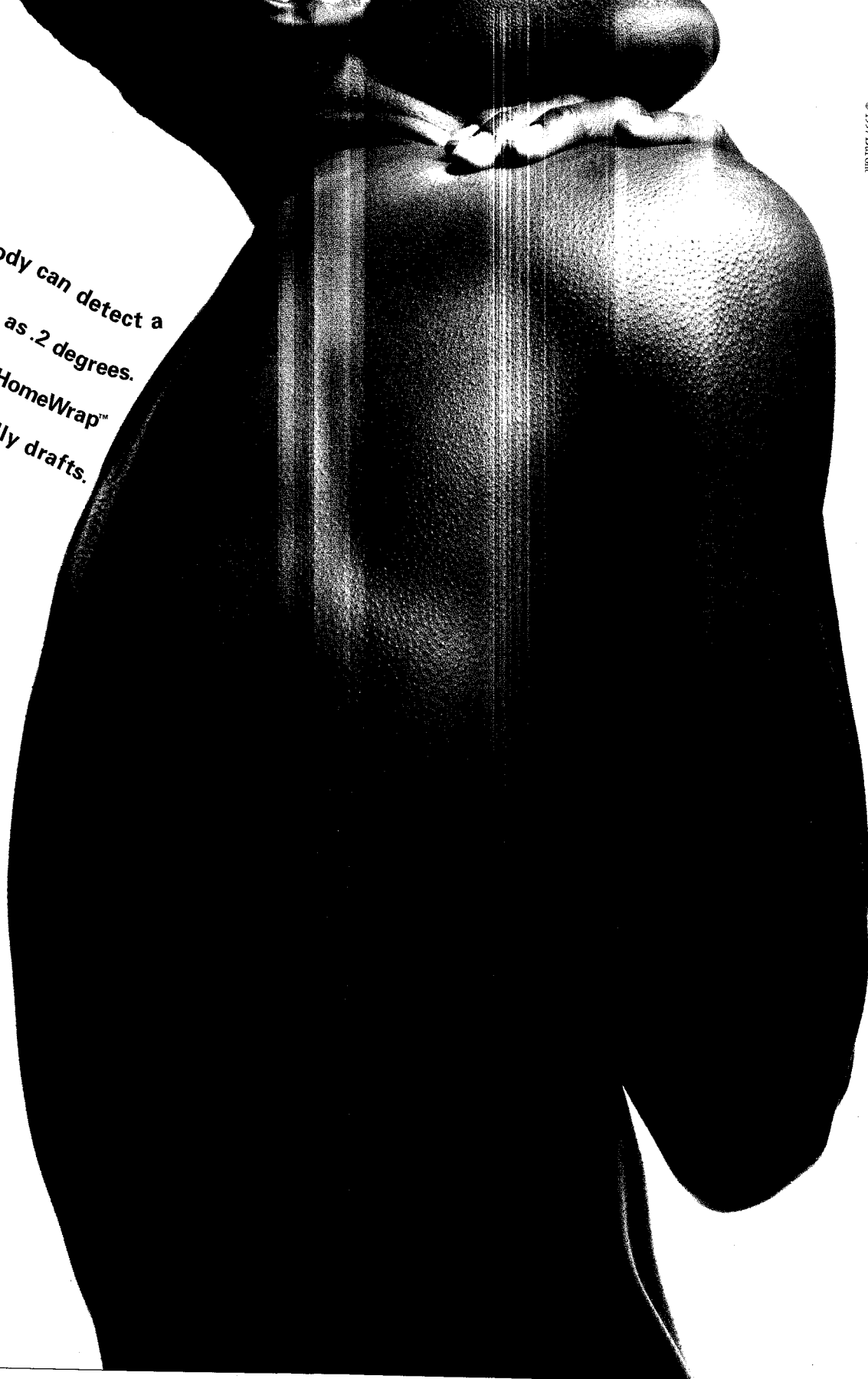
ZAKI CHEHAB AL WASAT / GAMMA LIAISON

Members of the Army of Islamic Salvation

religion and politics, and on every stimulant available, as autopsies of killed terrorists have repeatedly shown (I was told this by Algerian doctors assigned to hospital morgues)—had lost their bid to overthrow the Algerian state and were determined to bring down as many people with them as they could. Many of the

was long Algeria's only major newspaper, was a government mouthpiece. (Its editor in chief was murdered in 1995.) The trade-union federation, the General Union of Algerian Workers, was run by operatives of the ruling party, the National Liberation Front, and served, in the Soviet style, to ensure the workers'

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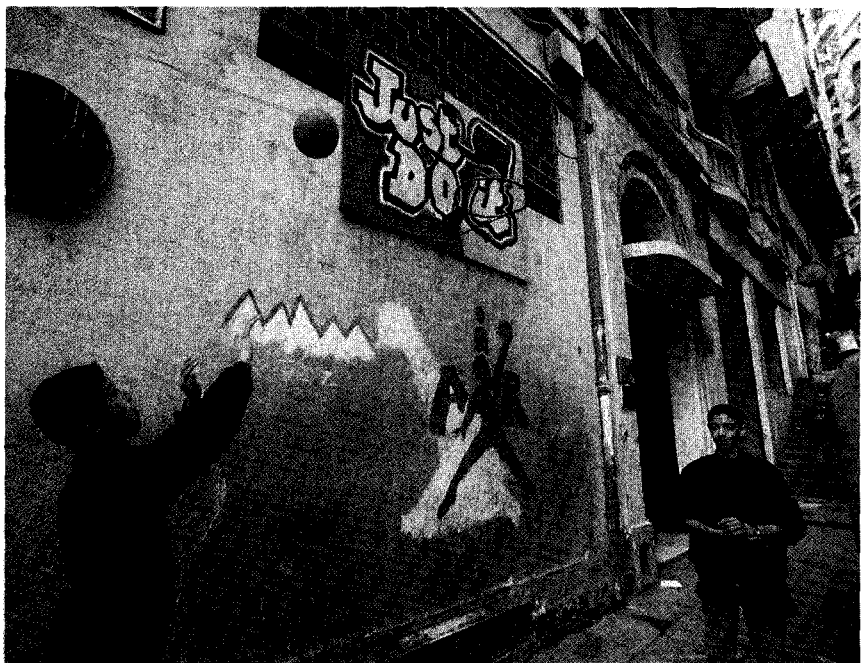
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EVEN as Western observers grew used to the idea that the “natural identity” of the Algerians would eventually sweep away a tottering regime that lacked popular support, Algerians were showing that, on the contrary, they would support a state that stood for their national independence. Voting repeatedly under the threat of death was an expression of this support, as was the daily decision of parents to keep their children in schools under threat from throat-slashing killers. Said Saadi, who got fewer of his compatriots’ votes than he had hoped, put out a word that took on the sound of a popular refrain: “resistance.” “Terrorism has not been defeated,” he observed to me after the exhausting legislative campaign of this past June, “but terror has been.” In this part of the world, characterized by authoritarian regimes and tempted—supposedly—by fanatical and reactionary religious ideologies, this was a big story, with implications for the ability of Islamic cultures to accept modernity.

To people who had been watching Algeria’s evolution, the assumption that sinister complicities within the Algerian state were involved in the assassinations and massacres was libelous. I thought of Khalida Messaoudi, a forty-year-old former teacher and political activist who went into hiding after being sentenced to die by those who shared the ideology of the killers who descended on Had T’Chekala. Among democratic, human-rights, and feminist organizations very few have expressed support for Messaoudi. In the United States only the American Federation of Teachers has recognized her struggle for human rights. She was condemned for being an impious, Zionist (she is a nonpracticing Muslim),

loose, radical woman, and thousands of women in Algeria have been killed for much less. Sixteen-year-old girls, for instance, have been dragged out of classrooms and slaughtered in school yards like sheep because the killers decreed that nubile girls should not be in school. This was the context and the background

French conquest of Algeria, yet he swallowed his humanitarian principles because he believed that Algeria was vital to French interests. Nevertheless he predicted that a dual society would end badly. This is exactly what happened. The convenient idea of a country inhabited by barbarians, who would hardly notice



In central Algiers, the pursuit of normalcy

and the reality. And now, when the world paid attention, it was to suggest the involvement of government death squads.

When the idea of an international commission surfaced, last last year, I happened to be in Algiers, on my third extended visit since the previous spring. The Algerians understood only too painfully that “an international inquiry suggests there is some doubt regarding the identity of the massacre’s perpetrators,” as the Algerian press agency reported in January. The Algerian ambassador to France said that same month, “At the least, it creates a certain equivalence between the forces of order and the terrorists, who are thereby in a certain sense exonerated, even though they have claimed responsibility for their crimes and even boast of them. . . . The result is to weaken the state in its fight against terrorism.”

PART of Algeria’s misfortune is to be the object of worn stereotypes. The French promulgated a whole series of stereotypes during the 130 years they occupied Algeria. Alexis de Tocqueville witnessed the appalling brutality of the

if their land was taken from them and improvements made upon it, was succeeded by Napoleon III’s romantic notion of an “Arab Empire” that would become the ally of his own. The Third Republic introduced the ethnographic racism of late-nineteenth-century science to justify mass settlements (only about a third of the European settlers in the early years of the century were French; Albert Camus’s mother, for instance, was of Spanish background. The French policy of assimilation—for the tiny minority that was capable of evolving from Islamic-Arab darkness toward the light of French civilization and citizenship—was a way to rationalize disenfranchising nine tenths of the population, which numbered almost 10 million at the apogee of French Algeria. There were only a few thousand “*évolués*” in the early 1950s, when the war of independence broke out. At this point the French Fourth Republic discovered that the Algerians were really communists—or, alternatively, “*bougnoules*,” equivalent to “niggers.”

Racist stereotyping in France closely

*Sixteen-year-old girls
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class and slaughtered
because Islamic mili-
tants have decreed
that nubile girls should
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resembled that in the United States. And just as in the United States, racism ultimately gave way to a kind of guilt-ridden inability to criticize. For thirty years scarcely a voice in France so much as suggested that whatever the merits of the post-independence Algerian leadership's forced march into economic de-

And the movement led by another religious authority, Sheikh Abdelhamid Ben Badis, sustained the sense of national identity on the basis of Islam and Arabic language and literature in the first half of the twentieth century—when the French colonial authorities were most intent on denying that Algeria was any different

in its relation to Paris from Brittany or Languedoc. Administratively, Algeria was organized into *départements* and, unlike Morocco and Tunisia, sent representatives to the parliament in Paris. That is why François Mitterrand, who was the Minister of the Interior when the war of independence broke out, in November of 1954, expressed a consensus viewpoint when he said, "*L'Algérie, c'est la France!*" Albert Camus, who came out of Belcourt, a poor Algiers neighborhood, knew this was nonsense, though he never supported national independence. Ben Badis's slogan, "Algeria my country, Islam my religion, Arabic my language," was incorporated into

at the height of the Islamic Salvation Front's terror, in 1993–1996, to say that 130 years of French colonialism had failed to dent the "Algerian personality," as had two decades of Algerian socialism, and that the extremists were merely reasserting Algeria's long-repressed political-cultural identity. This was another misreading, for it is perhaps in its relation to Islam that Algerian society reveals its modernity most deeply. The political culture of rural villages; the benign attitude of the Ottomans, who were chiefly interested in the coastal towns; and the attitude of the French administration, which viewed Islam as an effective excuse not to make citizens of the conquered population, contributed in different ways to making religion a force for cultural identity without its becoming the dominant political organizing principle.

THE terror did not begin with the army coup in January of 1992. Ideologically driven paramilitary cells of Islamists had begun testing their new skills early in the 1980s. Perhaps more significant than their attacks on border posts and police stations was their growing boldness in bullying ordinary people. It was by no means unheard of for them both to organize private charities for the needy and to beat people up for lax mosque attendance or, in the case of girls and young women, for dressing immodestly. When, following widespread anti-government riots in 1988, President Chadli Benjedid legalized political parties, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) emerged as a federation of the hundreds of networks, including paramilitary cells, that had constituted themselves in the 1980s. In the 1990 elections the FIS won more than half the seats in municipal councils across the country, with more than 54 percent of the popular vote, and the party was able to deepen and broaden what its constituent factions had been doing for years. In the more ideologically fanatical town councils highly controversial social policies were passed: girls could no longer play sports (Algeria had previously done a great deal to promote the education, athletic as well as academic, of girls); wedding parties could no longer have musicians, particularly singers of the popular Algerian blues known as *rai*; the intensifying paramilitary training of young toughs



CHRISTIAN VIOUARD / GAMMA LIAISON

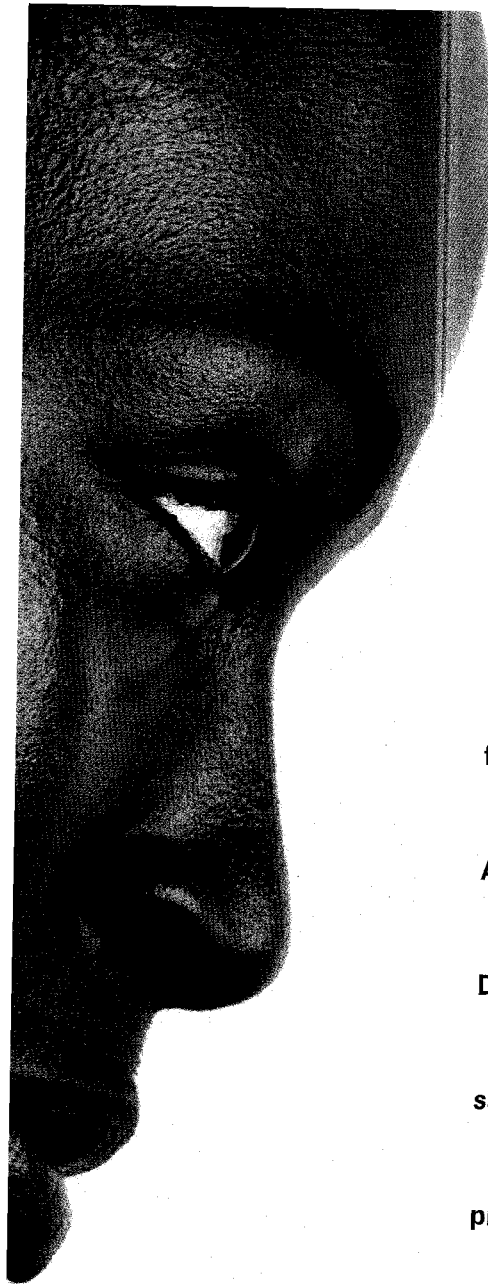
Prayers for the Islamic Salvation Front, 1991

velopment, it was coming at the expense of liberal political development. When the trouble began, of course, the French were nearly unanimous in asking, What can one expect from a gangster regime?

The socialist and revolutionary rhetoric of the post-independence years sometimes gave the misleading impression that Algeria was, broadly speaking, a secular society. But Algerian nationalists had always associated the idea of their country's Islamic identity with the independence struggle. Islam had in fact provided the bedrock of the revolution. The original Algerian freedom fighter, the emir Abd-el-Kader, who fought intermittently for nearly two decades in the nineteenth century, was a recognized religious authority in the Muslim world.

the program of the National Liberation Front (which governed with the army from 1962 to 1992), and the Algerian constitution, like most Arab constitutions, refers to Islam as the state religion even while banning from politics explicitly religious parties.

The militant rhetoric of French republicanism masked the fact that most Algerians were affected by it only to the extent that it pauperized them economically and marginalized them politically. But ultimately the proclaimed intention of the Islamic radicals to model their new Algeria on Iran gave the impression that Algeria had remained—despite colonialism and revolution and socialist experiments—a deeply traditional and religious country. This is why it was fashionable,



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would now be paid for with municipal funds. Distributors of TV antennas, which allowed viewers to follow immoral programs and movies from France and elsewhere, were told to find other merchandise to sell or risk the consequences. The same went for wine merchants.

The charismatic young leader of the FIS, Ali Belhadj, whose sermons at his mosque in Bab El Oued were widely disseminated, was open about his party's program. Algeria would be an Islamic state, with no room for anyone who did not accept that fact. The only purpose of women would be to produce more Muslims (this in a country where nearly half the university graduates are women), and there would be no use for the non-Arabic languages—French and Tamazigh (Berber)—that are spoken by Algerians. Belhadj and his colleagues were waging a full-scale cultural war.

The FIS called on its militants to launch an insurrectionary strike in the spring of 1991, to force President Benjedid to resign and call early national elections, which Belhadj was confident of winning. The union leaders associated with Benhamouda, the teachers' union reformer, had just wrested control of the General Union of Algerian Workers from the National Liberation Front, which had been running the federation Soviet-style—that is, as an appendage of the ruling party—since the mid-1960s. They were social democrats, and they viewed their adversaries as fascists. They did not care how popular Belhadj was. "Hitler was popular too," one reminded me. At any rate, the union responded in kind to the FIS's mobilizations, and for several months in early 1991 it appeared that the country was headed for civil war. The idea that Algeria is on the brink of civil war is itself one of the convenient stereotypes that recur in the French media. It never happens, of course. However, it is probably true that Benhamouda and his comrades would have fought with arms against an Islamist takeover. Last year Benhamouda, his bodyguard, and a parking-lot attendant were killed in front of General Union headquarters in Algiers.

WHEN the elections began in December of 1991 (the parliamentary elections took place in two rounds), the FIS forged well ahead of its major competitors. The FIS benefited from effective

mobilization and from a high rate of abstentions. It also no doubt benefited from what had become a broad feeling of disgust with the National Liberation Front—in power since 1962, thoroughly worn out, and now, as everyone could see, making a mess of the "liberal opening" that was supposed to give the country a fresh start. As for Benhamouda and the trade unionists, they warned that if the FIS were allowed to come to power (and Benjedid clearly would cohabit with them, in the manner of a French President), Algeria's democracy would be ruined just as it began. Benhamouda organized an ad hoc committee to demand an end to the electoral process. On January 11 streets in Algiers that in the previous weeks had been filled with demonstrators opposed to the FIS were now patrolled by tanks. The army forced Benjedid to resign, and set up ad hoc institutions to run the country until further notice.

Since then the Algerian army has been widely blamed for aborting democratic elections and provoking an armed uprising. The one place this line is never heard is Algeria. Not even Islamic militants (or the closest people to them that one can approach and still talk about it afterward) carry on about those elections anymore. The militants say they should have power in Algeria—not because they would have won the 1992 elections, though, but because they are the ones prepared to bring justice to their country, by following God's law. Ali Belhadj called democracy an arrogant sin because it presumed to substitute the will of the people for the will of God. Naturally, the only people qualified to know the will of God are the leaders of the FIS and its offshoots. "Why in the world," the teacher and activist Khalida Messaoudi said to me, "should we allow the enemies of democracy to take advantage of democracy? Did it make sense to let Hitler take advantage of Weimar democracy?"

I LEFT Algeria in late June of last year more cautiously optimistic than I had been in the past. There had been violence in the Mitidja Valley, but the men and women I had met there, who were popularly called *patriotes*, enrolled in communal self-defense organizations that could apply to the government for arms and were confident that their communi-

ties were almost back to normal. When I spoke with them again in the fall, they insisted even after the shocks of the summer that if their advice to the local inhabitants had been taken, no atrocities would have occurred. "Look, we cannot force people to arm themselves," I was told by a communal official in Boufarik, which had been an FIS stronghold in the 1980s and early 1990s. Boufarik is a little city in the valley, basking in the wonderful aroma of oranges from the surrounding groves, though since the late 1980s it has been struggling through a nightmare of marketplace bombings, assassinations in broad daylight, gun battles at night.

Local citizens assured me that the victims of last summer's massacres had rejected an offer of help from the patriots. Whether the army should have been more zealous defending the exposed villages, they said, was for the army commanders to decide, though of course people had a right to ask questions. And, quite properly, uncomfortable questions were asked about the meaning of the army's failure. But the real strategic difference began to be felt when the patriots organized, starting in 1995. They knew the physical and human terrain. "We knew which of our neighbors had criminal backgrounds and joined the Armed Islamic Group as a cover for their crimes," the Boufarik official said. "These are not good people, and we know who they are."

THE current policy of *rahma* for repentant terrorists is a serious improvement over the brutalities following the war of independence, when thousands of *harkis*, native auxiliaries to the French army, were killed or exiled. And this, too, had somehow escaped the notice of moralists. Algeria has evolved enormously since 1962 and has also changed a great deal since 1988, when the National Liberation Front's monopoly on political power was challenged by the constitutional reform process that allowed multi-party competition. The army personnel and the government officials who have dealt with the crisis since 1992 have differing ideas about what to do—not surprisingly. Algerian society has been under assault for ten years by a totalitarian movement, many of whose supporters, obviously, are not totalitarians. The people who make up this society have reacted in contradictory ways. Is this odd? ☛

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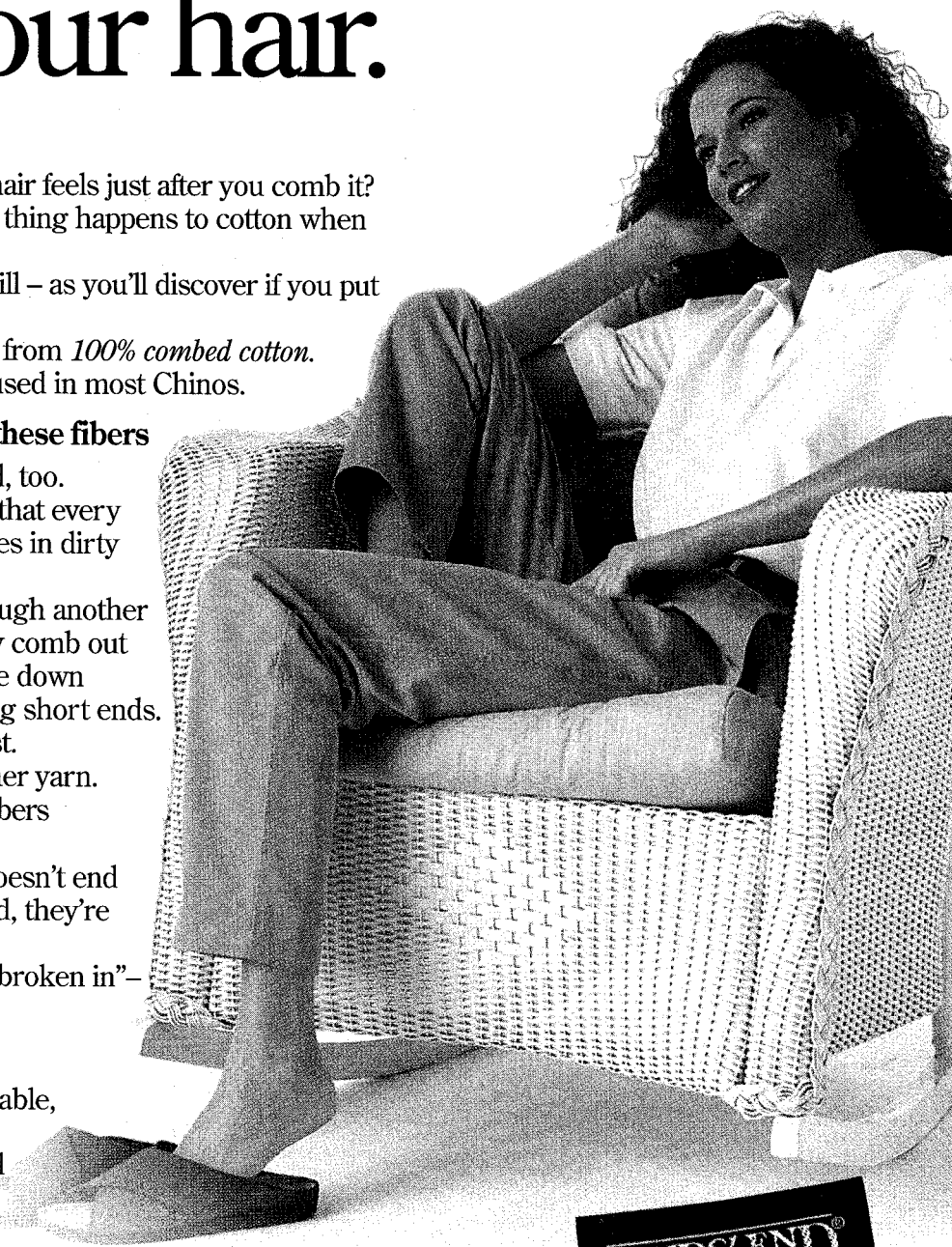
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we can no longer pretend to be busily going

about our daily lives, buzzing by a historical site on our way to work or play. How we fear attracting, close up, the curious or patronizing stares that at home we ourselves bestow on the passengers of the double-decker buses trawling our neighborhoods, turning us into local color.

And yet each day in Paris many small bands of visitors—and, I was surprised to find, Parisians—shuffle from landmark to landmark, from church to court-

yard to garden, seemingly oblivious of the humbling aspect of the walking tour. The Parisians see it as improving and (in that endearing Gallic way) as a source of renewed national and civic pride. When I visited not long ago, it was hardly high tourist season, but even so *Pariscope*, the weekly entertainment guide, listed ten

tours in English; twenty-five *promenades* in French on the weekend

alone; strolls through the Ile St. Louis and the Jewish Marais; and two tours of Père Lachaise, the city's largest cemetery—one of which was headed, lugubriously, "*Le temps ne compte pas au Père Lachaise.*" Interested in "Sacred Mathematics at Notre Dame de Paris"? In the sewers of Paris? In exploring "under the dome of the Académie Française"? Chinatown? "Fifteen secret passages in the heart of Paris"? *Pariscope* gives

dates, times, rendezvous points, fees, and routes described in seductive terms that, rather like ads for escort services, promise exotic experiences and secret urban delights.

And so, at two on a Saturday afternoon, I found myself among a group of fifty or so people—including an elegant elderly French gentleman, several constellations of chic middle-aged Parisiennes, three American backpackers, a pair of gay German tourists, a few solitary young adults, a family from Toulouse, and an older British couple out of a William Trevor story—assembled on the traffic island by the St. Paul Métro exit, waiting for our promenade through "*Hôtels prestigieux du Marais*," which is to say, distinguished buildings in an old, and newly fashionable, *quartier*. Eventually Isabelle Hauller, the exuberant blonde woman who would guide us, produced a book of tickets, and the would-be walkers gathered to pay their fifty francs, or about \$8.00, apiece.

"*Pourquoi pas?*" Hauller said at last, and set off, at a brisk trot, down the Rue St. Antoine and up the stairs of the church of St. Paul-St. Louis. Seated in rush-bottomed chairs near the altar, we listened to her voluble account of the church's colorful past, which touched on the frequent presence of Mme. de Sévigné, various distinguished Jesuits, and preachers famous for sermons lasting from early morning to late afternoon. After hustling us back out to the street, Hauller guided us through several narrow passageways and into an open area—the "village of St. Paul"—lined with antiques shops so enticing that it was hard to keep focused on the details of architecture and restoration.

We passed a section of a stone wall—the "ramparts of Philippe Auguste," which once encircled the city—embedded in a building directly across from the house in which Rabelais died. We were ushered into the courtyard of the exquisite Hôtel de Sens, one of the few medieval palaces left in Paris; like much of the Marais, this former archbishop's residence was rescued in the 1960s by André Malraux (then Minister of Cultural Affairs and, in

In the Marais, the Hôtel de Sully

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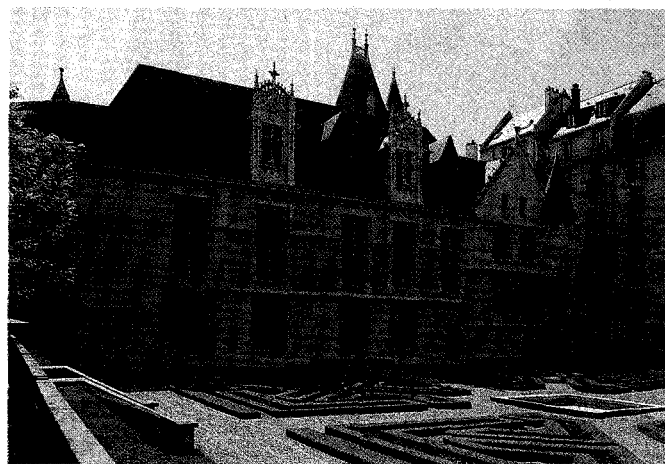
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Hauler's terms, "*le grand sauveur du Marais*") from a variety of architects whose plans for the then-dilapidated neighborhood involved razing it to the ground. By the time Hauler had led us through the door of an ordinary office building, into a charming secret courtyard surrounded by sixteenth-century dwellings, and then past an undistinguished building (currently under renovation) that, she informed us, was once the studio of Rodin's mistress and fellow sculptor, Camille Claudel, the point of the walking tour was clear: to reveal the rich history hidden behind the ordinary façade, to make us pay attention to what we would have missed on a casual stroll and would never have seen at all from the windows of a tour bus.

ALIVING hell for motorists, Paris is—compensatorily—paradise for walkers. Its grand arterial boulevards and capillary alleyways are lined with architectural landmarks, houses where native and expatriate icons were born and lived and died, large and small

demonically ambitious could conceivably hike from Montmartre to Montparnasse in one exhausting day. (Such was Rimbaud's first day in Paris; having come from the country to see Verlaine, he crossed the city on foot, too intoxicated by his new surroundings to register the existence of other means of transportation.) The less energetic may prefer to do the town arrondissement by arrondissement, especially since the neighborhoods have so thoughtfully arranged themselves by historical period (the medieval Sorbonne, the nineteenth-century Opéra), cultural association (the existentialist cafés of St. Germain and Montparnasse), and tone (raffish Beauborg; staid, glacial Invalides).



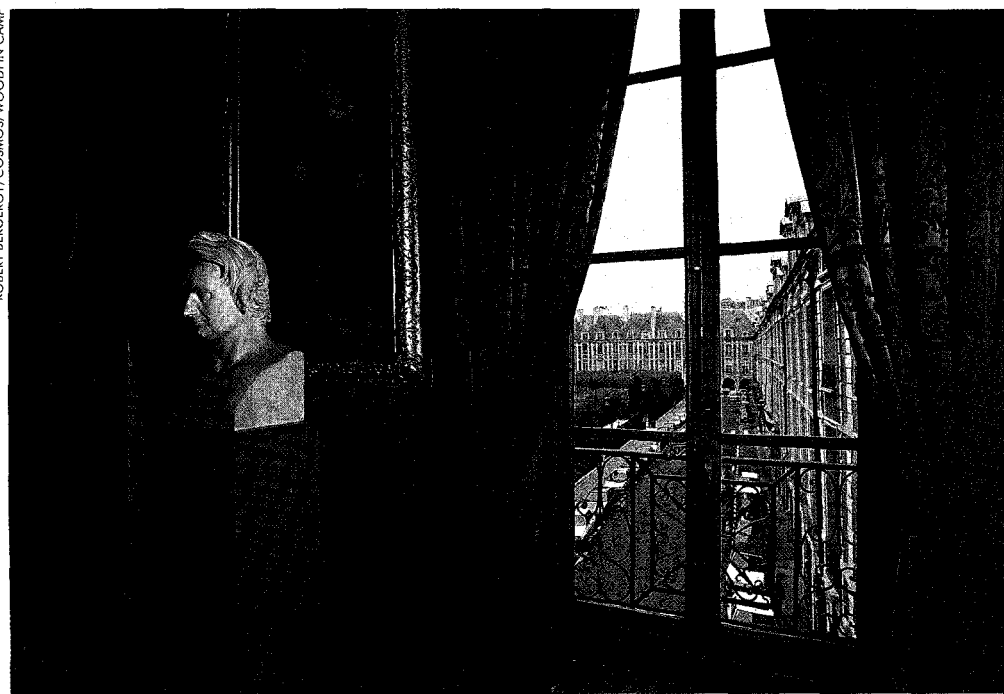
The medieval Hôtel de Sens and its parterre

full of walking guides that I took along with me to France weighed more than the rest of my luggage combined, including my laptop computer. As I'd sifted through the available choices, deciding which ones to bring along, it occurred to me that what we require from a walking-tour book is not so very different from the qualities we want in a tour leader: we prefer that our guides be knowledgeable, friendly, concise, and, most impor-

tant, well-enough equipped and informed (with maps and clear directions) to keep us from getting lost.

Of the guidebooks, the venerable standard is the green *Guide Michelin*, with its authoritative diagrams and detailed maps, its time lines and no-nonsense accounts of the history of significant monuments, its slightly peremptory method of rating sites on a scale from "**** Highly recommended" to the chillier "*Interesting." Most of the popular all-purpose guides (such as Fodor's and Frommer's) outline walks through atmospheric neighborhoods or past major tourist attractions. Other books (*Paris Walks*, *Walking Paris*) specialize in the perambulatory, and still others (*Walks in*

Hemingway's Paris, *The Impressionists' Paris*) target travelers who want to combine their walks with cultural agendas. *Permanent Parisians* steers one through Paris's extraordinary cemeteries; a pamphlet I received from a friend was intended principally for English-speaking devotees of Saint James, guiding them



On the Place des Vosges, the house where Victor Hugo lived

museums, and, for the less high-minded, fashionable or quirky boutiques (Provençal soap, vintage postcards, waiters' uniforms) and shops that expand one's notions about the aesthetic possibilities of pastry and charcuterie. The majority of the city's attractions are concentrated near its center, so the

Those who prefer to set their own pace or who are temperamentally incapable of submitting to the direction of even so entertaining a leader as Isabelle Hauler can choose from dozens of books that direct the traveler with a general or more closely focused interest in walking the streets of Paris. Indeed, the satchel

on treks to holy sites around Paris which were intended, in part, as training for the annual pilgrimage to the saint's shrine at Santiago de Compostela, in Spain.

Ordinarily the mere mention of any sort of tour (even the so-called self-guided) has me looking wildly for the nearest means of escape. Yet I found myself intrigued by the idea of seeing Paris at a more leisurely pace, in greater depth and very differently from the way I usually do, so as to become more intimately acquainted with a favorite city I already knew well. Devoting several days to walking tours of Paris seemed rather like taking one of those stolen, replenishing vacations during which one puts aside the distractions of daily life and actually spends time with a loved one. So I passed most of a pleasant week in Paris taking the walks outlined in my books. I found it to be an unexpectedly enjoyable experience. It was oddly relaxing to follow written instructions, to be told where to turn, what to look at, where to start and finish. I liked the mini-satisfactions (rather like solving a series of small, interconnected puzzles) of finding places (the house in which Manet died, the site of Gertrude Stein's salon) that, despite the passage of time, were where the books said they would be.

The walking tour requires that one change focus—and slow down. On previous trips I've walked around the lovely arcades of the seventeenth-century Place des Vosges; allowing for window shopping, it takes about fifteen minutes. But *ParisWalks*, by Alison and Sonia Landes, sent me door by door around the square, suggesting that I take a closer look at the Hôtel de Sully, pointing out the houses in which Mme. de Sévigné

and Victor Hugo once lived, encouraging me (as if encouragement were needed) to stop in at the Issey Miyake boutique. The authors told me which buzzers to push for admittance through heavy doors into pretty courtyards, now mostly surrounded by the offices of upscale design firms. The whole thing took about an hour, and I liked the feeling of knowing the square at least one level more deeply.

Obviously, walking tours provide helpful introductions to unknown cities for travelers who don't want, or don't have the time, to map things out for themselves. (The books take care of their readers, typically providing estimates of how long a walk might take, and suggesting cafés and restaurants en route.) But they're also useful when we think that we know a foreign city well—which generally means that we spend most of our time in a few neighborhoods, much as we do at home.

Faced with a choice of possible walks, I focused on parts of Paris where I'd never been, or hadn't been for years. I followed Frommer's *Walking Tours*, by Lisa Legarde, to the eastern part of the Fifth Arrondissement, the Arènes de Lutèce, a park incorporating the ruins of a Roman amphitheater. On the bright Sunday afternoon I visited, young men were playing soccer, couples kissed in the sun, same-sex groups of teenagers covertly eyed their opposite-sex counterparts. The walk led on to the Jardin des Plantes, which I'd never seen, and to which a wide range of Parisians had come, *en famille*, to stroll through the park, with its botanical garden, natural-history museum, huge ornate greenhouse, and zoo. Around the corner is the Paris

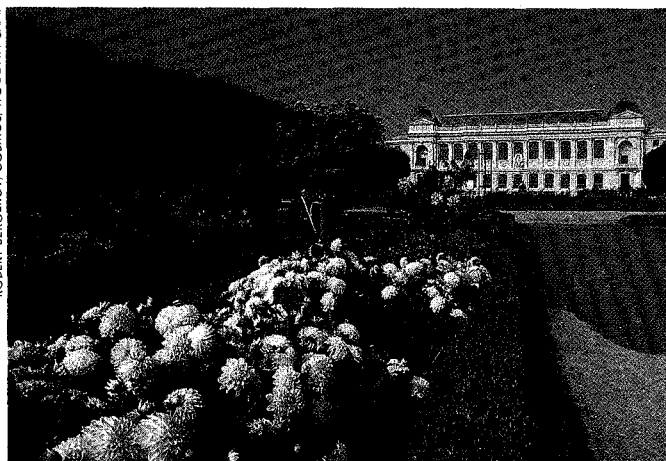
mosque, built in the 1920s, with exquisite tilework, fountains, and courtyards—through which one can take a different walking tour. Here Frommer's suggested, sagely, that I visit the tea shop on the grounds of the mosque, in a covered courtyard, with low tables, mint tea, and baklava, all of it doing a fairly con-

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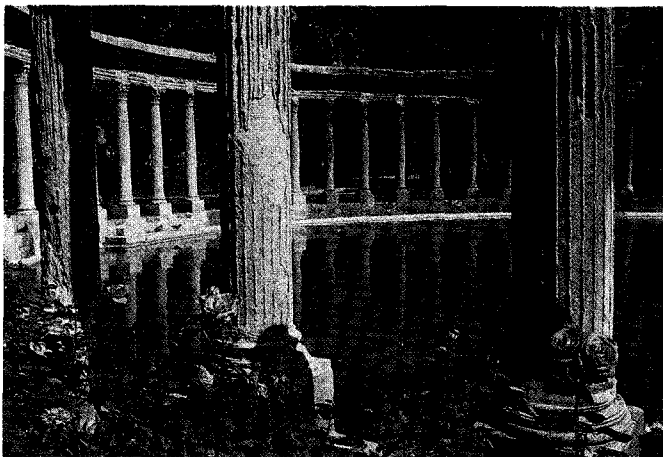


The Jardin des Plantes and its natural-history museum

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A faux Corinthian colonnade in the Parc Monceau

vincing, delightful imitation of a popular tea stall in the medina.

Walking Paris, by Gilles Desmons, includes both predictable and unusual routes. One of its thirty informatively but concisely outlined walks (brevity matters in walking-tour books—you don't want the author to be rattling on while you stand on the corner) took me to the Square Montsouris, a cobbled street lined with eccentric houses so charming and peculiar, so much like fairy-tale dwellings, that it was worth the trek through the less striking parts of Montparnasse. I also liked going from the Arc de Triomphe to FNAC (one of Paris's CD mega-stores), past the magnificent Russian Cathédrale Alexander Nevsky, and into the delightful Parc Monceau and its architectural folly, faux ruins, pyramids, and waterfall. I was glad to learn that Proust, who had lived nearby, used to frequent the park, like the well-heeled French children I saw still enacting Proustian dramas involving their nannies and pony rides.

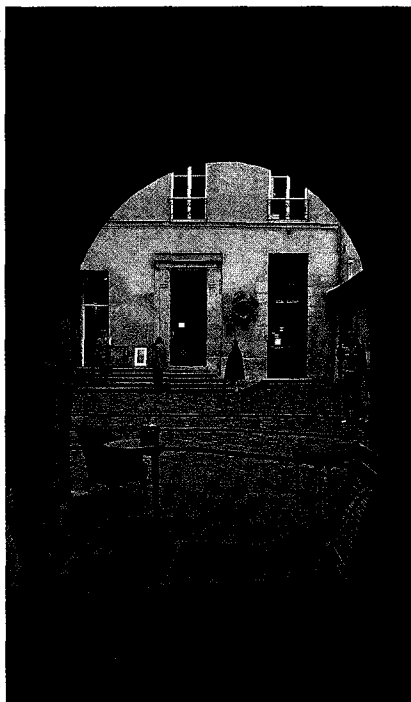
Others may feel more drawn than I was to taking the Hemingway rambles outlined in Noel Riley Fitch's *Walks in Hemingway's Paris*, soaking up what remains of the atmosphere at Harry's Bar and the Ritz. Of all the books, this one and *A Guide to Hemingway's Paris*, by John Leland, seemed most prone to counsel excesses of thoroughness and devotion. Both direct the reader to the café where, sequestered in the *toilette*, Hemingway was able to reassure Fitzgerald that the intimate parts of his anatomy were adequate. The bathroom has been remodeled, but it contains a typical WC *turc*—Hemingway's "squat toilet"—if you have not encountered one. Even a

tourist determined to have the authentic Hemingway experience may balk at following the helpful directions to the Fontaine de Médicis, where "Hemingway is said to have killed pigeons to eat," according to Leland. "You can buy peanuts from vendors outside to feed the pigeons and try your

luck at wringing their necks."

My favorite of the walking guides was *The Impressionists' Paris*, by Ellen Williams. The book is beautifully designed, palm-sized, light but with cardboard covers; it looks more like an elegant journal than a tour guide. In one long walk that can be broken up into several shorter ones (and condensed with brief Métro rides that eliminate uneventful sections of the route), it takes us to scenes that the Impressionists

FRANCK EUSTACHE/ARCHIPRESS



In the village of St. Paul

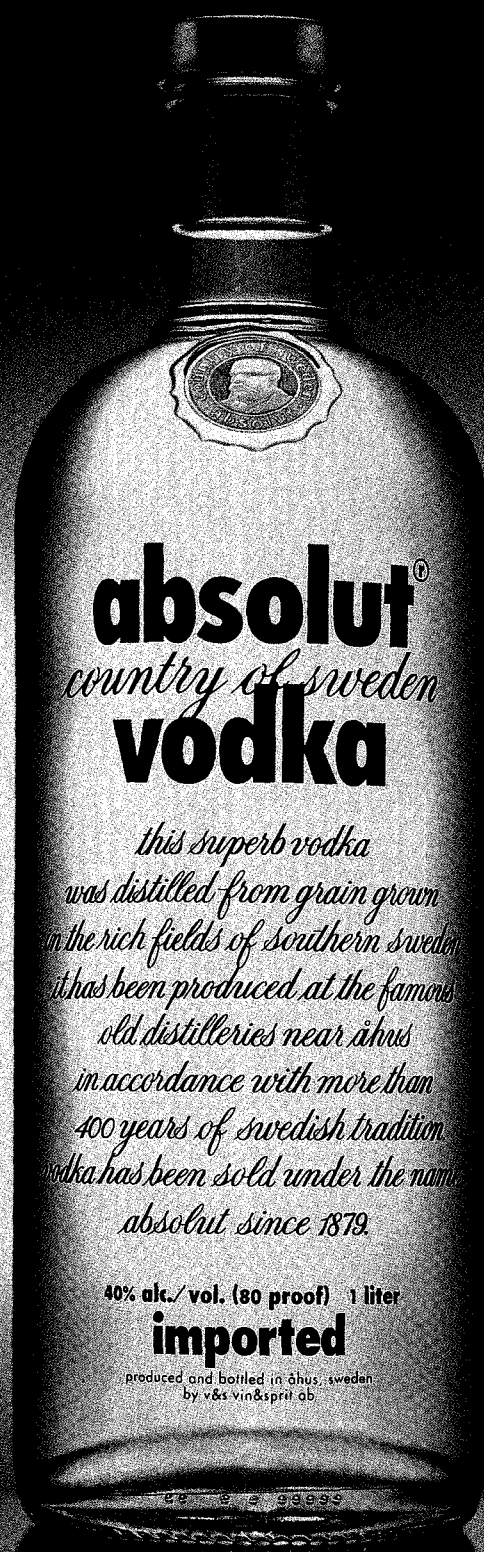
painted and places where they lived and worked. Williams leads the reader from the Musée d'Orsay, on the Left Bank of the Seine, along the quais and across the Pont des Arts to the Louvre, through the Tuileries and the busy Place de la Concorde, past the Opéra, and down

the grand boulevards into Montmartre.

Along the way the guide provides a quick, painless education in the history of Impressionism. (I was surprised to learn that Renoir, Manet, and Degas spent much more time on the Right Bank than on the more bohemian Left.) It takes one to unfamiliar parts of the city, or to neighborhoods that are often neglected. (The quiet residential area just north of the Gare Saint-Lazare was new to me, and it had been almost twenty years since I'd climbed the hills of Montmartre.) It recommends a range of restaurants, most notably Le Primerose, a jolly, unpretentious café, where for lunch I had a sublime *boudin noir* and mashed potatoes.

But what's most satisfying about *The Impressionists' Paris* is that it reproduces more than a dozen masterpieces and leads one to the spots where they were created. Of these sites, perhaps half are still thrillingly recognizable from the paintings. It often requires a bit of adjustment to get oneself into position, but all at once the art and the reality come into focus—rather like the moment when a stereopticon slide slips magically into 3-D. Tracking back and forth from the horizon to the book, one notices that the Pont des Arts is not so very different from the way it looks in Renoir's canvas, though the volume of traffic along the Seine has, of course, increased. Some angling is needed to get properly oriented, but suddenly church domes and rooftops pop into place—and Monet's *Quai du Louvre* appears in front of one's eyes. Perhaps the most pleasant shock of this sort came as, heading up the Rue de Turin toward the Place de Dublin, I caught my first glimpse of a building shaped like a thick wedge of pie, instantly recognizable from Caillebotte's 1877 *Paris Street; Rainy Day*.

At that moment, as revelatory as the opening of a shutter, a century faded away, Paris revealed its true face, and I comprehended some new truth about the endurance of art and the unique relation of city to cityscape. This altered focus, this sharpened awareness of time and history, this immersion in the surroundings, is why people take walking tours, with their surprises and rewards available only to those who use the humblest means of transportation, one block after another, step by step. ☼



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Travels Into America's Future

by ROBERT D. KAPLAN

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AND THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Imagine a land in which the dominant culture is an internationalized one, at every level; in which the political units that really matter are confederations of city-states; in which loyalty is an economic concept, when it is not obsolete; in which "the United States" exists chiefly to provide military protection. That is the land our correspondent glimpses, and it is no longer beyond the horizon

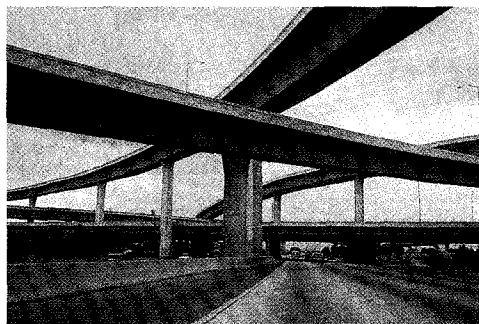
SANDSTONE cliffs, a peacock-blue ocean, and an endless bar of cream-colored sand filled my first view of greater Los Angeles as I drove south from the Santa Barbara airport on the Pacific Coast Highway and entered Los Angeles County. With the 10,000-foot-high San Gabriel Mountains stepping down to the sea, L.A. appeared too beautiful to be real.

From north to south, greater Los Angeles spans close to a hundred miles of seacoast. I stopped at Santa Monica, a city of 90,000 on the northwest edge of Los Angeles. After checking into a hotel, I looked at a map and saw that the Third Street pedestrian promenade was only half a mile away. My decision to walk there was a mistake I did not repeat in Los Angeles. The scrawny palms provided no shade on the sun-blasted asphalt. Except for a bag lady, a woman pushing her child in a pram, and a young man with tattoos who passed me at high speed on Rollerblades,



the street was empty for that half mile—a half mile that took me past the Civic Center and Auditorium, where the Academy Awards ceremony used to be held; the Art Deco town hall; and the Rand Corporation. Rather than people I saw only cars and enormous parking lots.

Cars could not enter Third Street, which was roped off for pedestrians, filled with food and jewelry carts, and packed with shops and restaurants. The result was hordes of people strolling—whereas just across the street and all the way back to



Coming and going, Orange County

my hotel there had been almost none. The crowd here was young, heavily Asian, and fiercely middle-class, dressed, like the crowds I have seen in Brazilian cities, in fashionable leisure and beach wear. I sat down at an outdoor Thai-Chinese restaurant for an early dinner. The manager was Japanese, the hostess Iranian, and the other help Mexican. The Iranian hostess, who wore many

rings and had mint-green fingernails, was telling a friend that as a graduation present her father was going to drive her cross-country to see Elvis's grave, at Graceland. On the sidewalk beside my table a large crowd watched a black youth tap dance to Brazilian music. The globalized architecture of the shops and office façades was familiar from the upmarket malls I had seen in the Midwest. Also on Third Street I saw more homeless people than I had ever seen in a similar-sized area in New York City or Washington, D.C. They were doing crossword puzzles, talking to themselves, and trying to enter the restrooms of expensive restaurants before waiters caught them. They were overwhelmingly white and male. I saw one man with long gray hair wearing an Army jacket and a woolen hat despite the 80° temperature. He banged his hand against a bench and shouted disconnectedly. People moved away. The homeless barely threaten the panorama of prosperity secured in Santa Monica by a burgeoning multimedia and software industry, which the well-dressed, thirtyish crowd reflected.

Over the next few days I drove through the suburban San Fernando Valley bordering Santa Monica to the north, which is equally prosperous. Unlike Santa Monica, the San Fernando Valley is part of the City of Los Angeles. Its business and political leaders want to secede. With 1.3 million inhabitants, the San Fernando Valley would constitute the nation's sixth largest urban area, and one of its richest. This is not white flight—40 percent of the valley's residents are Latino or Asian. Among the white population, Jews are the largest ethnic group. These people want to duplicate the prosperity of incorporated post-urban dynamos in northern Los Angeles such as Burbank—now the home of the Walt Disney Company, Warner Brothers, and NBC—and Glendale, 45 percent of whose population is foreign-born Latinos, Asians, and Armenians. Joel Kotkin, a Los Angeles-based urban-affairs specialist, calls the secessionist trend that has already Balkanized St. Louis and other American cities the "urban confederacy movement." Unlike the original secessionists, these activists will win, he thinks, because cities are now too big to work—they can function only as a league of smaller, incorporated pieces.

A third of all U.S.-born middle-class Latinos and more than a quarter of all U.S.-born middle-class Asians in the five-county greater Los Angeles region marry someone of another race. Even the notion of white versus black is losing relevance here, with Latinos constituting 38 percent of the Los Angeles County population and Asians and blacks 11 percent each. The racial polarization that divides Washington, D.C., for example, where white suburbs surround what is, in effect, a black urban homeland, is little apparent in L.A. Even within the Los Angeles city limits blacks make up only 14 percent of the population, whereas they make up 29 percent in New York City. For ten days I drove throughout greater Los Angeles, stopping often to walk in different neighborhoods. Media images of the L.A. riots and the O. J. Simpson trial had prepared me for a city as divided as Washington. But in L.A., where more

than eighty languages are spoken, that's not what I found.

Zaheer Virji is a twenty-seven-year-old ethnic-Indian immigrant from the East African nation of Tanzania. He wore a blue-velvet baseball cap, a white T-shirt, jeans, and running shoes when I met him and his American wife in a Santa Monica hotel lobby. Virji's family, which imports goods from Hong Kong to Tanzania, is part of a merchant community from the Indian subcontinent which forms the middle class in Tanzania, along with several other African countries. Virji remembers the times when police thugs under the control of the former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere harassed his relatives and arrested his uncle. He told me that race relations are "so much better" in southern California than in Africa, where Indians and Africans completely stereotype each other: "I came here to escape not just Africans but Indians, too." (The name Virji is an alias.) He went first to England and then to Canada, where there are large Indian communities. But he didn't feel free. "In those places the community is what is happening. Here in the U.S., it's *you* that is happening. There is less of system here, fewer laws to restrict you."

Virji came to the United States six years ago, and has no college degree or green card—yet. In the six months before we spoke, he had earned more by investing in the stock market than his wife had made at her job—a reflection not only of his skill but also of an economy in which stocks and other assets have risen but wages have not. With this money, along with funds from his family in Tanzania, he was looking to buy a business: a flower shop, a gas station, whatever he could get the best deal on. He was using a broker; if the business was a gas station, he told me, he would need to know about underground tanks and environmental regulations. He wanted to go into partnership with the current owner for a three-year transition period, to secure part of his investment if the business did not turn out as advertised. Ten years from now, he explained, he wants to be the owner of a small business with able employees, so that he can spend his time investing the profits in the stock market.

**An all-new Asian-American
civilization is forming in
California, and flourishing, too.
Why, I asked myself, worry
about "the Asian threat"? The
best way to contain Asian
dynamism is to absorb it—as the
United States is doing.**



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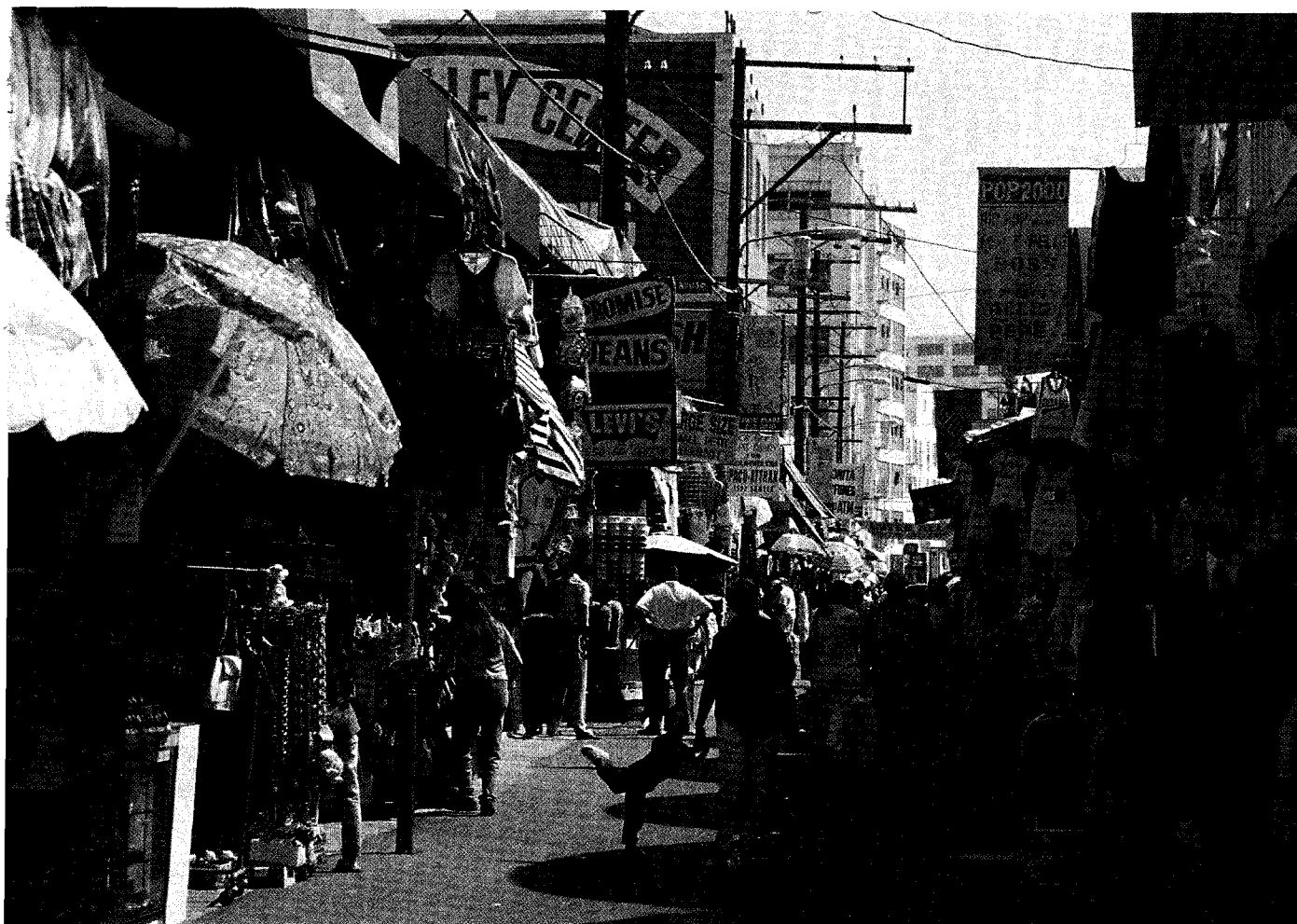
I WENT east from Santa Monica across the City of Los Angeles to the suburbs of Monterey Park and San Gabriel. As I drove, I saw a sprawling metropolis in transition. The official, ceremonial downtown, composed of the convention center, courts, government offices, and the *Los Angeles Times* building, looked less vibrant than the new, pedestrian-packed downtowns I saw on the way—Westwood and Beverly Hills, a contiguous area marked by the office buildings of City National Bank, Occidental Petroleum, and others; a Korean church; a Mexican-American real-estate agency; and one of the largest schools in the country that teaches English to foreigners. Several real-estate agents told me that the 1992 riots in heavily black South Central Los Angeles had quickened the exodus of corporations toward the wealthier western part of the city.

I passed through West Hollywood, an area of gays, elderly

Third Street Promenade, Santa Monica

Jews, and Russian immigrants; Koreatown; and the “Banana Republic,” a neighborhood populated by Central American immigrants. The notorious Watts and South Central neighborhoods were one-story encampments of poor blacks encroached upon by the Latino immigrants who make up two thirds of the population of those areas. Upwardly mobile blacks are moving from here to the Moreno Valley and other inexpensive suburbs in an eastern area of greater Los Angeles called the Inland Empire. Watts and South Central are, in ethnic and racial terms, being annexed to Mexican East Los Angeles. Demographers say that in coming years Latinos will dilute the presence of blacks in Los Angeles, as they have already done in Miami. Latinos are now the majority of the region’s industrial work force. The number of Latino- and Asian-owned businesses in Los Angeles County has increased from 70,000 to 220,000 since the early 1980s, while the number of black-owned businesses has remained static at 20,000.

I parked in East Los Angeles and walked about a mile past small stores selling furniture and other household goods. I noticed many bridal shops, suggestive of strong family patterns, and many pedestrians, too. Los Angeles, I had begun to realize, was very much a vibrant pedestrian city—in parts. One part I



had seen was the largest garment district in North America, whose narrow alleys are packed with Latinos, Asians, and Middle Easterners, a throwback to early-twentieth-century New York. This vast confederation teems with successful commercial and residential areas like the Third Street Promenade and East Los Angeles. But you need a car to travel between them.

From the "Mexico" of East Los Angeles I crossed into "Asia": Monterey Park and San Gabriel, once gray and run-down and now booming with glittering banks, supported by Hong Kong Chinese and Chinese-American immigrant money, and many new malls, among them San Gabriel Square.

At this mall, which is decorated with Spanish colonnades, I entered the 99 Ranch Market, part of a California Chinese supermarket chain. At first it seemed like any other enormous American supermarket, with dozens of aisles and too much air-conditioning. But nearly every product in the store was an Asian specialty item, either imported or grown in the Los Angeles area. Chinese food stores are common in the nation's various Chinatowns, and so, increasingly, are supermarkets like this one. But never before had I seen forty aisles, each a hundred yards long, devoted to noodles, pork, taro, tofu, pea sprouts, dried shrimp, soybean paste, spicy bean cabbage, dried seaweed, rice spirits, and also Thai, Korean, and Japanese items. Next door was a Chinese restaurant with an overabundance of

Throwback: the garment district of Los Angeles

employees and an absence of Western cutlery or Caucasian customers. Women crossed the red floor pushing food trolleys filled with saucers of chicken feet and other dishes.

An all-new Asian-American civilization is forming here, and flourishing, too. Pacific Rim cultures that were antagonistic for centuries are cooperating in the California marketplace. Traditionally nations rise and fall; but at the 99 Ranch Supermarket I wondered if America might escape that fate by shedding its skin as a nation to reveal an international civilization.

I visited another pan-Asian supermarket, this one to the south—in Cerritos, once a dairy-farming district but now a planned, incorporated community 45 percent of whose inhabitants are Asian. The checkout counters are manned by Latinos, and the customers are mainly Chinese. A few blocks away I called on Vincent Diao, a forty-four-year-old who emigrated from Taiwan in 1981. Though ethnic Chinese account for only 2.7 percent of Los Angeles County's population, one in five home buyers in the county is Chinese, and such top Los Angeles hotels as the Beverly Wilshire and the Los Angeles Biltmore are Chinese-owned. Diao wore expensive glasses and casual clothes; there were two cars in his driveway and new appliances in his house. Everything was in perfect order,

almost as though nobody lived there, although Diau and his Chinese-American wife, Alice, a schoolteacher, share the house with their two children. The children's academic awards were framed near a violin and a piano, and their schedule for music lessons and other after-school activities was posted on a wall beside charts of the English alphabet and Chinese characters. The Diaus own a computer, as do 72 percent of Chinese-Americans; 53 percent of Chinese-American families are linked to the Internet, in contrast to 11 percent of all families. (Forty percent of Asian-American adults hold college degrees—almost twice the percentage of Caucasians.)

Diau told me, "I moved to Cerritos for the same reason that many Chinese and Korean immigrants have—because Whitney High School is one of the best public high schools in the state." Diau has law and political-science degrees from universities in Taiwan, and a law degree from Tulane; he is a consultant on Asia with the Hughes Corporation. People complain about the American legal system, he told me, but compared with those in Asia it is straightforward: "If you have discipline and determination and a strategic goal, this country is simple; only the language and alphabet are hard." Because Americans are clear and informal, "you can cut through issues quickly," he said. "In Taiwan everyone wants to control you: there is so much social pressure. Here, among people who are not Chinese, I can truly be myself." Diau told me that he mixes with all kinds of people—Latinos, Middle Easterners, Indians—but unfortunately not with blacks. This was less choice than adherence to tradition, he explained. Chinese families favor intermarriage with Caucasians but not with blacks. "I hope that changes," he said.

Why, I asked myself, worry about "the Asian threat"? The best way to contain Asian dynamism is to absorb it—which is exactly what the United States is doing.

AS I drove through greater Los Angeles, the term "city-state" was foremost in my mind, not because L.A. is similar to ancient Athens or Sparta but because of the very size and eye-



East Los Angeles (above) and Monterey Park (below)

popping variety of this thriving urban confederation, with its hinterland of oil refineries and agricultural valleys. Santa Monica has the ambiance of a beach resort, East Los Angeles is like Mexico, Monterey Park is like Asia, and Cerritos is an Asian Levittown for the nineties. Except for the prevalence of home-security systems, the winding streets near Dodger Stadium, north of downtown, have almost a rustic, Southern European aspect, with their vine-covered houses and steep hills. Going from one township to another, I often felt as if I had journeyed far and wide. The freeway system makes this compression of distance possible, and climate abets the system's expansion: because Los Angeles gets little rain or frost, road surfaces are cheap and easy to maintain.

"I'm middle-class," Gregory Rodriguez, a researcher who lives on a steep street near Dodger Stadium, told me when I visited him. "But there are also working-class and poor people a block away, and some wealthy entrepreneurs: Jews, Anglos, Mexicans, Chinese, you name it. It's an Old World neighborhood of immigrants, like neighborhoods in Manhattan." I sought out Rodriguez, a thirty-one-year-old third-generation Mexican-American, to learn more about ethnicity in southern California, and particularly about the culture of "Latinos"—a word Rodriguez prefers to "Hispanics," which he calls "cold and generic." "'Hispanic' is a term people in the East use," he said, "but here no one does." Had I relied merely on my East Coast impressions, the figures Rodriguez presented would have startled me. In the Northeast, "Hispanics" are often Puerto Ricans and Dominicans, who have not assimilated as successfully as Mexicans; yet nationwide, Mexicans account for 60 percent of all Latinos.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Rodriguez told me, 55 percent of Latinos are bilingual in English and Spanish. In greater Los Angeles four times as many U.S.-born Latinos are in the middle class as live in poverty. A quarter of all middle-class families in southern California are Latinos, and in eco-



conomic performance U.S.-born Latinos living in greater Los Angeles are not far behind whites and Asians: about half of U.S.-born Latinos here are in the middle class, whereas 58 percent of white or Asian households are. Among black households in the area 38 percent are in the middle class; the national average is 26 percent. Perhaps the most telling distinction among Latinos, Asians, and blacks is in the percentage that are government employees in an increasingly entrepreneurial economy. While 28 percent of middle-class blacks in greater Los Angeles work for the federal, state, or municipal government, only about 14 percent of middle-class Asians and 10 percent of middle-class Latinos do.

Rodriguez used his own term, "mestizo-ization," for a dual perspective prevalent among Latinos: they maintain a firm belief in some degree of bilingualism while welcoming U.S. citizenship and often intermarrying. David E. Hayes-Bautista, a medical sociologist at the University of California at Los Angeles, told me that the Latino experience suggests that "being American simply means buying a house with a mortgage and getting ahead—there is no agreement anymore on culture, only on economics." Seventy-five years ago D. H. Lawrence called America a homeland "of the pocket" and not "of the blood."

Immigrant dynamism coupled with Asian as well as Latino mestizo-ization are the central facts of late-twentieth-century Los Angeles. And the reality is richer still, as Indian immigrants buy up Artesia, next to Cerritos, and Iranian immigrants, after buying many properties in Beverly Hills, buy now in nearby Westwood. "South Central is no longer a burnt-out core, and that is partly because of Latino immigrants," Rodriguez said. "Because Latinos came in at the bottom, a pool of home buyers existed for upwardly mobile blacks who needed to sell their properties and escape South Central and Watts for racially mixed, middle-class areas. Leftists talk of blacks being 'displaced,' but that disparages the very blacks who have succeeded. Is it 'displacement' to climb your way out of the ghetto?"

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Orange County: Among the World's Biggest Economies

ORANGE County, which forms the southern part of greater Los Angeles, is, along with Westchester, Marin, and Dade, among the few counties in America that are household names. Orange County is America's most fully evolved urban pod, in which alliances are based on technology rather than geography and classic definitions of city and suburb no longer apply. Perhaps the county—larger and less dense than the largest cities but smaller than the smallest states—will replace the city as the civic center of the future. Already the western Kansas City suburbs, which I had visited earlier, are called Johnson County, and the prosperous Maryland suburbs of Washington, D.C., are called Montgomery County.

Orange County—"a major airport in search of a city"—stands for what everybody hates about the suburbs, with their crass affluence and neither-nor landscape. It is often described as 782 square miles of dull residential streets, malls, and office parks without a downtown. And it is notorious for the 1994 bankruptcy of its treasury, the result of trying to fund its operations not through high taxes but through risky investments. I was prepared to hate Orange County. I came away respecting it, more intrigued than I had been by many "exotic" and "romantic" cities.

Parts of Orange County are beautiful, and the county *works*. If it were a state, its economy would be roughly equal to Arizona's; if it were a country, its economy would rank among the top thirty or so in the world. About a third of the firms in the county are involved in international trade, and they run the gamut of high-technology products. Orange County is now what Johnson County and other suburban pods I visited in the Midwest could become: a multiracial world trade center linked to overseas cities by direct flights—say, between Omaha and Beijing and Kansas City and Paris. (Since the late 1980s the export sectors of many local economies in America have grown dramatically; from 1987 to 1995 by 200 percent in California, 250 percent in Utah, and 375 percent in Idaho.)

The received impression that Orange County's 2.6 million residents are "white bread" is false. Almost a quarter of the county's population is Latino, two and a half times the national average; 11 percent is Asian, nearly three times the national average. Only two percent of the population is black—one sixth the national average.

Another false perception of Orange County is that there is no there there. In fact there are many theres there. The county comprises twenty-eight separate municipalities, many with their own centers. The term "suburb" does not properly describe this advanced, polycentric urban pod. Because these centers do not resemble traditional downtowns, they are overlooked by people whose eyes have yet to adjust to the post-industrial age.

ARTIST: KHURSHIDA KAMALOVA, BORN 1967 (BUKHARA)



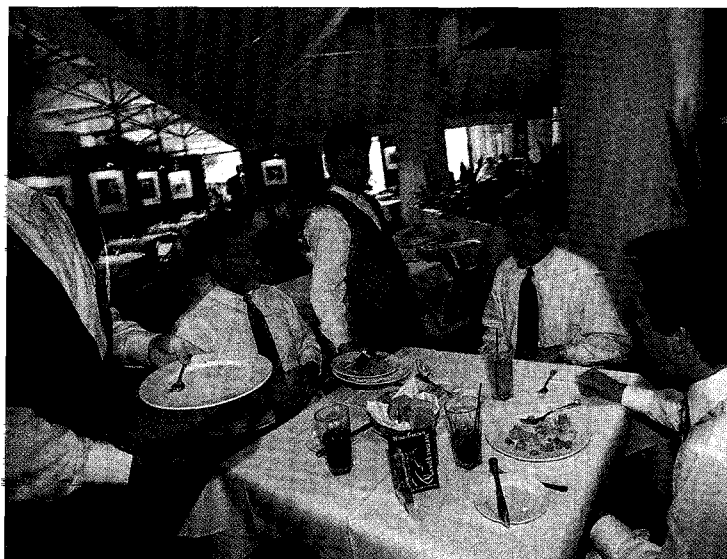
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I DROVE first to Newport Beach, one of Orange County's municipalities, to see Dennis Macheski, a real-estate consultant who worked in a well-appointed two-story office complex beside the Pacific. "The myth that people in places like Orange County spend an inordinate amount of time in their cars is wrong," Macheski began. "The average commute in the United States is twenty-two minutes. In southern California it is twenty-five minutes—almost the average. That's because almost everyone in the area works close to home. The jobs are



The restaurant Bistango, Irvine

no longer in the city—they're right here, in post-suburbia, or whatever you want to call it. Even in the Inland Empire, whose suburbs are the least developed and attractive, seventy percent of the residents work locally. Nobody in the suburbs needs to drive more than thirty minutes to a great restaurant or a theater." In fact, established post-suburban regions like Orange County and northern New Jersey rank high nationally on availability of cultural venues. "We're no longer a suburb. Affluent New York City bedroom communities average fifteen hundred persons per square mile. Orange County's average density is six thousand. So we're far more urban in many respects than parts of New York."

"Tell me about the future of greater Los Angeles and the United States in terms of real-estate patterns," I said.

"Fifteen years hence we will be bigger. Nothing will stop us. Instead of fifteen million in greater Los Angeles we'll be eighteen million. Two thirds of the new people will be in outlying areas as the urban region spreads farther. The same will be true for Las Vegas, Phoenix, Portland, Sacramento, cities in Colorado, and elsewhere. Two thirds will be homeowners, but only one quarter will be married with children. There will be more and more nontraditional families and singles.

"The number who work at home and telecommute may double, from two to three percent of homeowners to six percent. But so what? It's still just six percent. Because media

people travel in the same circles as telecommuters, they exaggerate their importance, but in the real-estate business we know that most people—no matter what wonders technology brings—want to be reasonably close to the action in urban regions.

"Otherwise the two big immigrations will continue, because the economy requires highly educated Asians to work in high tech, and low-skilled Latinos to be the housekeepers and gardeners, among other jobs, for the high-tech people. These are the people who will largely account for the increased growth of urban regions across America. In greater Los Angeles the black population grows at one percent a year, but the Asian-Latino population grows at three percent. Even in California politicians have proved that they lack the will and the ability to stop immigration. Proposition 187 [an effort to deny benefits to noncitizens] was directed against the poor—nobody thought the worse of Asians or middle-class Latinos. The result, of course, was merely to encourage more Latinos to apply for citizenship. Corporations will determine immigration: if they need highly skilled workers in defense and software industries, they will recruit them in one form or another from Asia and other places."

As I had been told over and over again by businesspeople and other experts, it is far more cost-efficient to import the rest of the world's talent than to train citizens at home, especially when weak or nonexistent national education standards and insufficient tax revenues have been the ruination of many local schools. For the low-skilled worker, U.S. citizenship confers less advantage than it used to, because those with higher skills will get the well-paying jobs anyway and become citizens in the process.

Macheski's analysis does not contradict Gregory Rodriguez's. The housekeepers and gardeners Macheski referred to are first-generation Mexican-American; the skilled Latino middle-class workers Rodriguez documents are usually second- or third-generation.

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"BEFORE you leave Newport Beach, go see the Fashion Island Mall," Macheski suggested.

"But I've seen malls before," I told him.

"See this one—it's really affluent and evolved. Believe me, it's worth it."

It was. From Macheski's office I drove past two more office campuses and then into a large parking lot. I ascended a wide stairway and entered the mall—an outdoor labyrinth of crowded pedestrian streets punctuated with large clay pots full of bright-red geraniums, and storefronts that mixed neoclassical and baroque styles with red-tiled roofs. There was a fountain shooting pellets of ice, and jewelry carts made of hand-tooled wood painted in rich earthen shades standing in the middle of a sidewalk that was laid with brilliant tiles. The geometric sweep of marble, sea-green wrought iron, and terra-cotta partially obscured by bougainvillea vines made for a brilliant mixture of late-twentieth-century abstractions and nineteenth-century intimacy and rusticity; I was as impressed as I had been when I saw the great squares of medieval Bukhara and Samarkand. I stood in an atrium made of pink and cream stone, veined marble, terra-cotta, what looked like malachite, and chrome alloys. Here postmodernism, the architectural style characterized by eclectic juxtapositions, was

fully articulated. Malls in affluent pods of the Midwest may soon look like this.

Of course, the year-round warmth of southern California helps: it allows for the outdoor setting, and for the flowers that soften industrial aspects of the architecture. Still, I thought about what Joel Garreau suggests in *Edge City* (1991): a beautiful urban setting like Venice once seemed crass too, to sophisticated people of the age; malls and office parks are only early phases of an architecture that might become equally lovely as it develops. Are the souks of Damascus or Fez truly more beautiful than the Fashion Island Mall? Not to me. But the Damascus and Fez souks do have one feature they share with ancient and medieval marketplaces and not with this one: they bustle with activity and chatter. The shoppers at Fashion Island, unlike the less-wealthy crowd at Santa Monica's Third Street Promenade, were quiet. Conversations were so few as to be memorable. I recall a group of men and women in business attire at a café table with open account books and spreadsheets, talking softly about a building plan. Otherwise, smooth elevator music was all I heard.

Alladi Venkatesh, of the Graduate School of Management

Fashion Island Mall, Newport Beach



at the University of California at Irvine, describes the Nordstrom's at nearby South Coast Plaza as "both a shopping complex and a fantasy land," where a shopper can try on a pair of Italian shoes while a live pianist plays Chopin. I saw similar scenes at Fashion Island Mall. The pursuit of style, whether in art, architecture, or the flesh (and physical comfort and high fashion are now much more widely available than in the past), may be the ultimate goal of the good life. But its side effect is social fragmentation: the threatening and unsightly poor are kept out of sight, and, as usual, people choose to live in exclusive residential areas.

Libertarianism—the politics of many Orange County residents—is the ideological companion of such fragmentation, favoring individual choice on such social issues as abortion and marijuana use along with fiscal conservatism and tax cuts. Libertarians say, "Leave me alone to live my life and don't bother me with paying to help less-fortunate citizens." Fashion Island Mall suggested how the urban pods I saw in western St. Louis and western Omaha could one day be as aesthetically agreeable as they were already economically efficient. But I wondered whether the new urban civilization evinced by this mall could also foster traditional patriotism or civic virtue.

NEAR the airport in Irvine, in another office park, was the *Orange County Business Journal*. When I had phoned for an appointment, the editor, Rick Reiff, offered to take me to lunch. I assumed he preferred to talk over lunch rather than in his office. I was wrong. Reiff took me to lunch to show me what really goes on in Orange County.

Reiff, who won a Pulitzer Prize for local reporting in Akron, Ohio, has run the editorial side of the *Business Journal* since 1990. He wore a blazer and a stylish collarless shirt without a tie. He drove me from his own office park to one just like it, where he led me to a restaurant, Bistango, next to a Japanese bank. Inside, amid sculptures, tinted glass, metal alloys, spotlights, canopies, and a black see-through pyramid stacked with expensive bottles of wine that reached almost to the ceiling, I heard the hum of conversation that had been absent at the Fashion Island Mall. The men and women who crowded the tables wore flashy ties and dazzling jewelry. I saw brown and yellow faces everywhere, and noticed many more cups of coffee and glasses of iced tea than alcoholic drinks. "That's because real business is occurring here," Reiff said, in his warm and rough Chicago accent, as we sat down to eat. "Millions of dollars are being transacted all around you." During the country's extraordinary urban growth of the 1880s Rudyard Kipling observed that in America "men were babbling about money, town lots, and again money."

Where's the power? John Gunther always asked in his travelogue of mid-twentieth-century America, *Inside U.S.A.* In the late 1940s the answer was often the local party machine. In the late 1990s power was here, in this restaurant, dispersed among

Businesspeople kept pointing out that it is far more cost-efficient to import the rest of the world's talent than to train citizens at home, especially when weak national education standards and low taxes have ruined many local schools.

many more people, who were much less accountable. The issue was simply profit, disconnected from political promises or even geography. Orange County was merely a home base for the headquarters of global corporations, which could be moved in an instant—for example, in response to a tax increase.

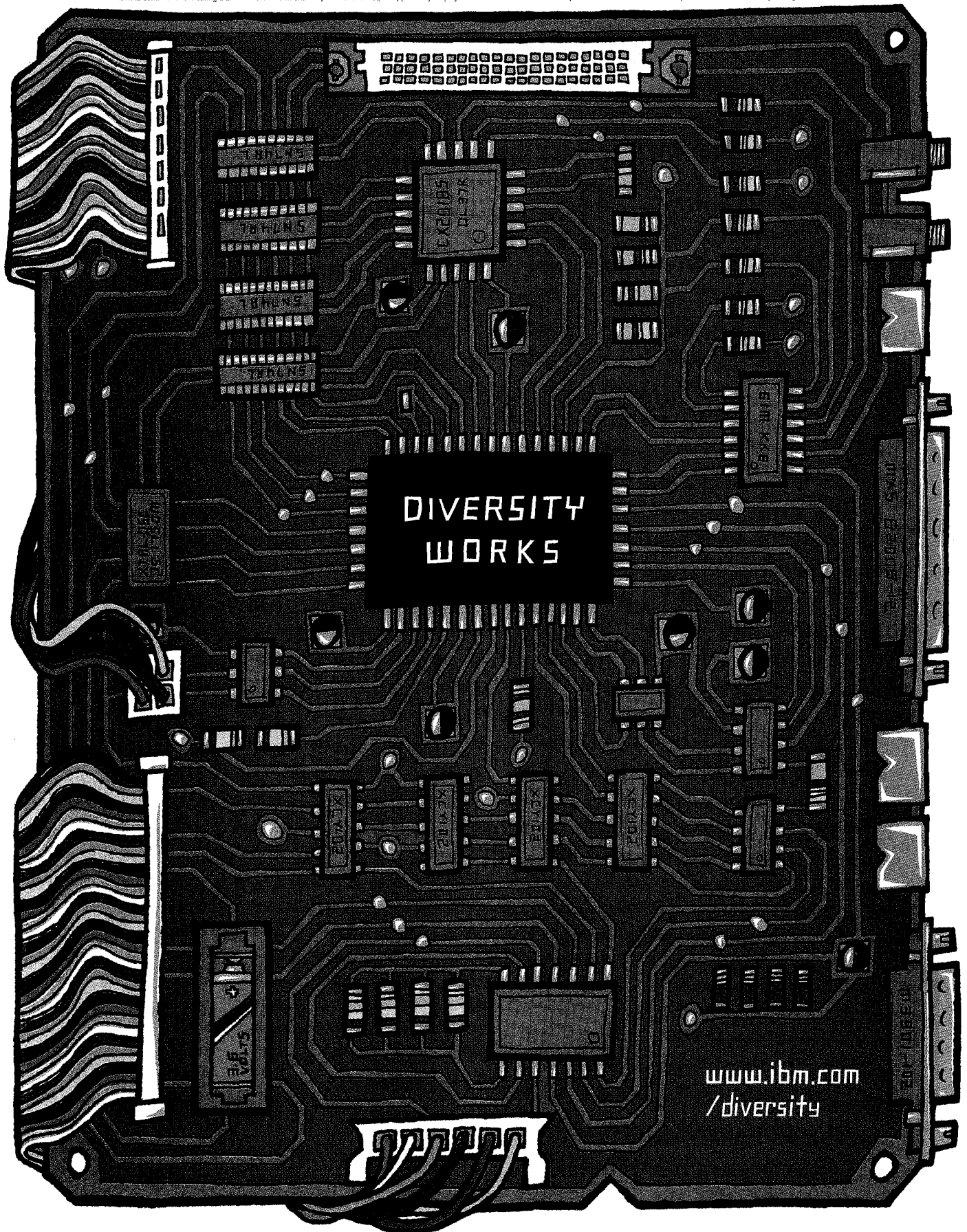
"What kind of business is being transacted?" I asked.

"Biomedical, pharmaceutical, a little genetic engineering, international investment, precision manufacturing, apparel, computer chips, and all kinds of software multimedia," Reiff told me. "Global trade and work forces are everything for us. Orange County is roughly one percent of the U.S. population, but it has three percent of Fortune 500 companies. Every time there is a conflation of the publishing and multimedia industries, power shifts slightly to California from New York, because the future will favor multimedia over mere books."

Later, back at Reiff's office, I leafed through recent editions of the *Business Journal*. There were stories about this group of Iranians or that group of Taiwanese or Pakistanis or Mexicans from Sonora buying this or that technology company. Some years ago the Polish journalist Ryszard Kapuscinski, seeing Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, and Mexican faces in an Orange County computer factory owned by a Pakistani and two Chinese, wrote that the culture of the southern California work force is "a mix of Hispanic-Catholic family values and Asian-Confucian group loyalty," with hiring done through family networks. One quarter of science-degree holders in the United States were born abroad, with Indians and Chinese predominating.

"Mexico has become both our cheap labor force and our export platform," Reiff went on. "Companies that are moving factories to Mexico would have left the U.S. anyway—and gone to Malaysia, for instance. The nation-state cannot keep them here if cheap, competent labor exists abroad. With NAFTA [the North American Free Trade Agreement], at least we can keep much of the work in North America."

I asked about Orange County's credit collapse in 1994, after



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officials had made bad investments with public money. "A blip on the screen—in historical terms just a rainy day," Reiff said. "Roads are still being paved. No police have been fired. What I'm saying is that the Orange County phenomenon is intact. Imagine the effect on Cleveland, for instance, if it lost two billion dollars in bad investments, the way Orange County did. If in twenty years all this glitter around you fades, historians will look back on the 1980s and 1990s here as a golden age, with the credit crash a minor theme."

Reiff continued, "I'm originally a city kid. I played baseball in the alleys in Chicago. I know what is urban and suburban, and *this*"—his eyes wandered around the room—"is neither; it's something new."

Reiff told me that the reason there are so many malls is that "with 'income tax' a dirty word, the only way for municipalities to raise revenue is through sales taxes, so they encourage mall building; some of these malls will go bust."

"Will this place fight for its country?" I asked. "Are these people loyal to anything except themselves?"

"Loyalty is a problem," Reiff said. "Only about half the baseball fans in Orange County root for the California Angels [whose stadium is in Anaheim, a county municipality]. I root for the Chicago White Sox. So many people here are from somewhere else, whether the U.S. or the world. People came here to make money and enjoy the good life. In the future patriotism will be more purely and transparently economic. Per-

memorial, which includes a museum and a library, was packed with visitors. The multiracial crowd at the site, like the people I saw on the streets of Yorba Linda, appeared to represent Nixon's "silent majority." Yorba Linda is the original, sepia-toned California—Iowa in the Sunbelt. The Latinos and Asians here looked wholesome and self-assured; they looked American, lacking the worldly flair of their compatriots at Bistango.

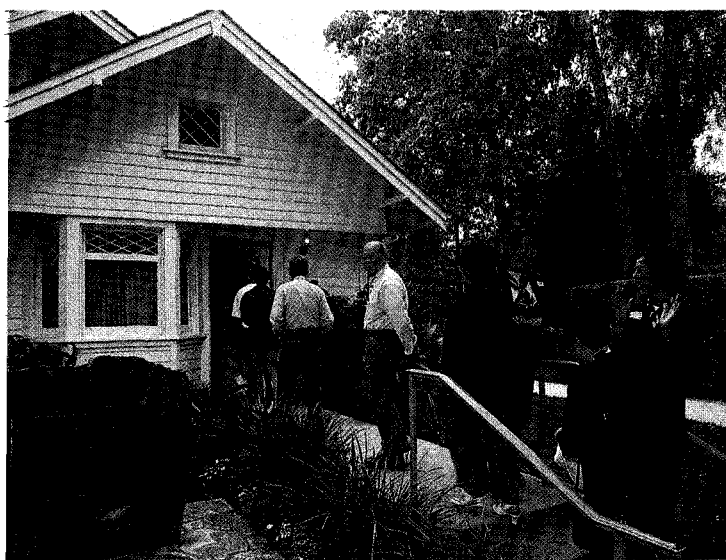
From Yorba Linda I headed southwest, back through Anaheim and Garden Grove, into the heavily Vietnamese Orange County municipality of Westminster. Amid miles of one-story tract homes I pulled into a shingle-and-Sheetrock strip mall named Saigon Plaza to look for a place to eat dinner. I entered a run-down café where men were playing cards and listening to Vietnamese music. The atmosphere was thick with the smoke of unfiltered cigarettes. I felt that I was in Southeast Asia. Then somebody switched off the Vietnamese music and put on the NBA playoffs.

W **Canada: The Wild Card**

HEREAS in southern California I focused on how the transformation of the city was changing the face of America, in the Pacific Northwest I focused on the idea of nationhood itself.

Dismissing Canada as irrelevant, boring, or a joke comes easily to Americans, and occasionally to Canadians as well. The Canadian novelist Mordecai Richler says that Canada is "not so much a country as a continental suburb, where Little Leaguers govern ineffectually, desperate for American approval." Canada has a population one ninth that of the United States (29 million as opposed to 261 million). Canada did not have to struggle for independence from Britain—Britain approved confederation in 1867, forcing disparate provinces to unite as a way to contain the United States after the reconsolidation of the Union. Whereas the United States represented the most daring political experiment since Athenian democracy (one that would succeed beyond imagining), Canada never had a clear-cut historical mission—except, perhaps, providing for its own survival. Polls show that Canada's sense of identity rests heavily on the country's social-service institutions, including national health care, and even those are deteriorating.

Yet to ignore Canada's fate is to miss the point of North American history. Military events in Canada may have set the stage for American independence in the first place. Had the French held on to Canada through the eighteenth century, they might well have constrained the thirteen colonies to retain a protective bond with Britain. The nineteenth-century historian Francis Parkman wrote, "So long as an active and enterprising enemy threatened [the colonists'] borders, they could not



Richard M. Nixon's birthplace, Yorba Linda

haps patriotism will survive in the form of prestige, if America remains the world economic leader."

After I left Reiff, I drove through Santa Ana, Garden Grove, and Anaheim, ending up in the northeasternmost township of Orange County: Yorba Linda, birthplace of Richard Nixon. The little wooden house that Nixon's father, Francis, built in 1912 with materials from a mail-order catalogue still stands. The President and his wife, Pat, are buried a few steps away. The

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break with the mother-country, because they needed her help . . . [thus] there would have been no Revolutionary War; and for a long time, no independence." But, as it happened, the French and Indian War, part of a worldwide struggle among the European powers called the Seven Years War, ended in 1763 with a British victory over French forces in Canada, which encouraged France's withdrawal from North America, obviating the English-speaking colonies' dependence on Britain. During the War of 1812 New England actually debated secession and a closer link to British North America, and this threat hastened the rise of American nationalism under President Andrew Jackson. The relationship is still symbiotic: the dissolution of Canada would affect the United States more than any imaginable crisis overseas.

Moreover, Canada, which along with Switzerland is already among the most decentralized countries in the post-industrial world, is split by a blood-and-soil linguistic nationalism that threatens to dismember it. When I asked the president of one of America's most powerful international corporations what was the most important issue the Washington foreign-policy elite was ignoring, he responded, "The eventual breakup of the Canadian federation and its effect" on our own nationhood.

Though Canada is the largest country in the Western Hemisphere, stretching to the polar ice cap, the habitable part of it looks like Chile laid on its side. Almost all Canadians live within a hundred miles of the U.S. border, so it is reasonable to imagine that they might merge politically with the rest of North America's temperate-zone population. In Canada's early days, before bridges and motorized boats, the Saint Lawrence River and the Great Lakes formed enough of a natural boundary for an Atlantic-oriented nation to take root. Even west of the Great Lakes, along the arbitrary border formed by the Forty-ninth Parallel, the fact that the fur trade was so much more important to the people north of that line than to those south of it made for some semblance of an organic division. But with expressways and ferries now crossing the waters, and the inexorable merging of the two countries' economies (four fifths of Canada's export trade and two thirds of its import trade are with the United States), Canada is increasingly like the northern United States.

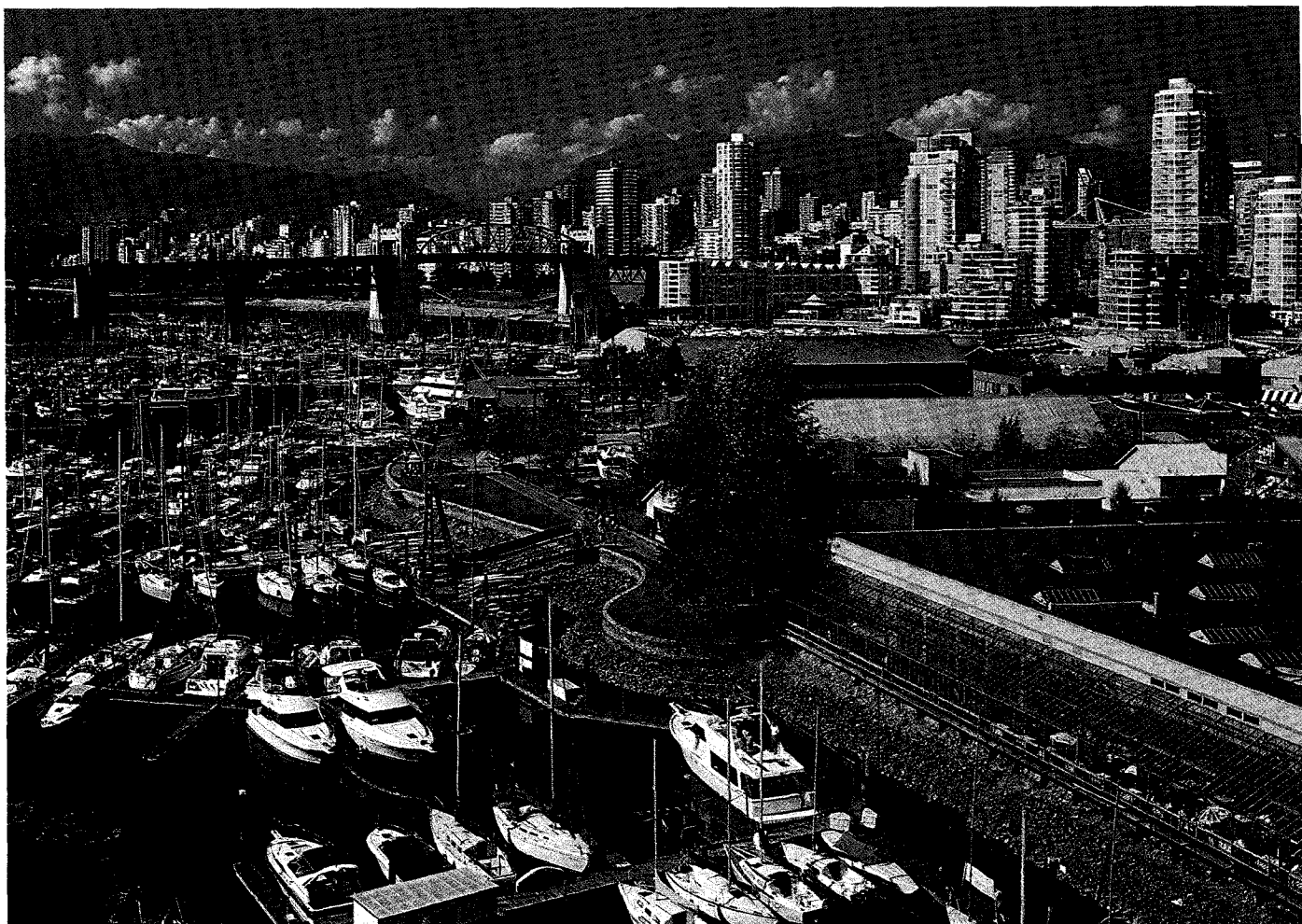
However, as the frigid tundra keeps Canada's population from spreading northward, America's loud materialism, unruly style, and social problems keep Canadians from straying south. That hundred-mile-wide belt of population from the Atlantic to the Pacific has evolved as a subtly distinctive community, one that many citizens want to preserve. English and French Canadians might not mind separating from each other, but immigrants from throughout the world may demand Canada's continued existence. For them, Canada provides unlimited freedom and economic opportunity while offering protection from the ruthless laissez-faire capitalism of the United States.

The psychological importance for Canadians of their country's style and separate evolution should not be underestimated. Canadian resentment of the United States is clear in the way that Canadians smugly disapprove of those who attempt great endeavors. Indeed, says the Canadian writer Margaret Atwood, "Canadian rebellions have never become revolutions precisely because they have never received popular support. 'Prophets' here don't get very far against the civil service." Canada never had a Wild West, because Canadians love law and order—the Mounties are a national symbol. Canada's society prefers collective heroes, like the builders of the transcontinental railroad, over individual ones.

Not a stimulating place, perhaps, but one different enough that parts of English Canada are not eager to merge with parts of the United States; they would do so only if the Canadian federation fractured first. Such a dissolution may be as likely to begin in Canada's westernmost province, British Columbia, as in Francophone Quebec.

British Columbia and its urban dynamo, Vancouver, which is linked more closely to the Pacific Rim than to most of the rest of Canada, are animating North American regionalism. Strengthened by NAFTA, regionalism may yet undo the current divisions of sovereignty, which have their origins in the 1763 Treaty of Paris. Margaret Ormsby, a local historian, writes that "British Columbia was in, but not of, Canada." Canada did not grow westward in the same organic manner as the United States. British Columbia joined the Canadian federation only in 1871, four years after the British forced the other provinces to unite. Out here, Ormsby writes, the Canadian Union was based not on "sentiment" but on "material advantage." The economic benefits of the transcontinental Canadian Pacific Railway in effect bribed British Columbia to join Canada. Even so, the British part of Columbia, which in 1846 split from the part that became the state of Washington, retained strong cultural and economic links to a region whose center was San Francisco. Today British Columbia's economy is separate, and the high-

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way to Seattle and Portland and the air routes across the Pacific matter more than links to the rest of Canada. The province exports an amazing 40 percent of its goods to the Pacific Rim, and 50 percent to the United States; 80 percent of exports from Canada as a whole go to the United States. It is the only Canadian province that would surely do better, not worse, were the country to disintegrate. "Canada ends at the Rockies" is an expression I heard repeatedly.

This is not to say that British Columbia identifies with the United States. When I crossed the border at Osoyoos, the differences between the two countries were what I first noticed. Not only were the money, the measurement units, the shapes of the signs, the construction materials, and the flag (with the soft imagery of the maple leaf replacing the overtly political stars and bars) different in Canada but so were the accents, which were sharper and vaguely British. "Schedule," for instance, was pronounced without the *c*. But compared with the Third World–First World division I saw on the Mexican border, these differences were trivial.

I set out for Vancouver, a leisurely day's journey. Halfway there I reached Manning Provincial Park—across the border from North Cascades National Park. Manning Park marks the beginning of the Cascade Range, a north-south line of powder-white volcanoes and glaciers, tinted blue and garlanded

One view of the future: Vancouver, British Columbia

by cold rain forests, which more than any other geographical feature—to say nothing of any state or national border—defines the Pacific Northwest. It is a magical frontier, breathtaking even when seen from the air. To fly from the eastern United States to Portland, Oregon, and see the "Ring of Fire"—the glacier-mantled peaks of Mount Baker, Mount Rainier, Mount Hood, and Mount St. Helens soaring over brooding, cathedral-dark forests—is to arrive in a distinct place, or almost nation.

I met Pacific mists, sparkling snow, moist and glistening spruce and fir forests, tumbling streams, and silvery lakes, beside one of which I watched an Indian immigrant family fishing for rainbow trout. The parents spoke in the accents of the subcontinent, the children in the hard-edged English of Pacific Canada. Harlequin ducks and gray-and-white belted kingfishers flipped off the water.

Farther west, close to Vancouver, the Fraser River was choked with massive logs, chained together and about to be dispatched, perhaps to the Far East. Vancouver appeared rather suddenly—a lesson in how compact the cities of the Pacific Northwest are compared with others on the continent. Here, even for urbanites, nature is close by.

I Vancouver and "Cascadia"

It was late afternoon when I arrived in Vancouver and checked into a bed-and-breakfast in a residential neighborhood with flame-red hawthorn trees. Traffic islands at each crossing slowed cars. The cost of parking downtown was exorbitant, so I rode the bus. As in Portland and elsewhere in the Pacific Northwest, the nearby glaciers and volcanoes, visible from many an urban street, have led to a preoccupation with conservation, which has in turn generated penalties for automobile use.

The bus heading downtown was clamorous with conversation and filled with well-dressed people—so different from buses in many parts of the United States, whose riders are mostly silent and poor. (Portland buses, I would discover, are like Vancouver's.) Like the bus, the shiny stone benches on rose-bedecked Robson Street were filled not with the poor and homeless but with well-dressed people, talking. The only cell phone I saw belonged to a man with a New York accent who was telling someone that he would "be home in three days." There were many benches, and also a profusion of cafés, buzzing and crowded, set against buildings made of glass, marble, unusual metals, and polymers. As at the Fashion Island Mall, the trees and flowers that were planted beside new buildings in the 1970s and 1980s, and constant architectural refinements, have made for fine urban landscapes. But unlike the Fashion Island Mall, Vancouver had a true urban life. Even in newspaper-and-candy stores knots of people were talking by the counters.

Many of the faces were Asian. A third of greater Vancouver's 1.81 million people are Asian, with Chinese alone making up nearly 20 percent of the population. Asian immigrants account for much of the population growth of 2.5 percent a year. One local joke had it that "the Japanese want to buy Vancouver, but the Chinese won't sell it." I saw many signs in Punjabi, Hindi, Farsi, Arabic, and Khmer—but almost none in French, an official Canadian language. In the schools here Mandarin is spoken more commonly than French. Vancouver, with its glitzy, visually lively high-rise condominiums, is becoming an Asianized city on the Pacific Rim of North America, dedicated to global materialism; a real East-West hybrid culture is emerging here.

The next morning I visited Warren Gill, an urban geographer and the executive director of the Harbour Centre campus of Simon Fraser University, an institution founded in 1965 and named for a nineteenth-century Vermont-born explorer and Northwest fur trader. The campus consisted of a single building with green and blue glass interiors. Finished in 1989, the building conjured for me "the future"—that is, it made me aware of transition and change. As the Ringstrasse in turn-of-the-century Vienna illustrates, social and economic change, often revealed through architecture, precedes political change. What the archi-

tecture here revealed was the abstract and urban character of our collective future, and the emergence of the city-state.

"There, you see it all—isn't it great?" Gill said. He waved his hand toward his office window, indicating the panorama of the Burrard Inlet, a belt of blue water crowded with seaplanes and set against the snow-capped peaks of the Coast Range, with Vancouver's bustling harbor, heliport, and nexus of railroad tracks in the foreground. "With a dynamic and highly educated population and strategic transport links," Gill said, "this is all you need to be sovereign in the phase of history we are entering. Cities and their environs provide garbage collection, schools, and even your neighborhood—but they get the least of your taxes. The bulk of your tax money still goes to the state or province and the federal government, and what do they do for you? Isn't it antiquated? But that will change. In the coming decades your tax money will increasingly go to the place you really care about." Gill's tone was enthusiastic and consciously provocative. "Though I guess we should all pay taxes to that Information Age military you are creating in Washington, D.C. They'll in effect sell us the protection we will need against terrorists and other bad people. You see, we don't need *you* [he meant America], and we certainly don't need Canada. What we need is your military!"

I didn't try to interrupt.

"The miracle is that Canada has lasted as long as it has. It makes no sense. Oh, yes, I'm *fond* of Canada. Canada is something you're fond of, like a drunken old uncle. And I'm proud to be a Canadian. We all are, in the sense that Canada is more aesthetically pleasing than the United States. It's cleaner and less unruly. But the nation-state is gone in Vancouver."

Gill called Vancouver "a beautiful setting in search of a city." He said, "Did you know that after L.A., Vancouver has one of the biggest entertainment industries in North America—seven hundred million dollars a year in revenue. Hollywood makes *The X-Files* here. The Canadian dollar is cheap, and we're in the same time zone as Los Angeles, so Hollywood finds us useful, especially since Vancouver looks like anywhere: it's a generic, modern-postmodern global place. But it's still not a real city in the sense of true creativity and economic dynamism—yet. It's not L.A. or New York."

Vancouver, as Gill and others told me, began as a real-estate venture in the 1880s once the Canadian Pacific Railway was in place, and it is still very much a boom-and-bust town, floating now on a real-estate bubble created by the Hong Kong Chinese, who in the 1980s and 1990s bought \$2 billion worth of local real estate. In addition to real estate and the money that immigration brings—on average, each Asian immigrant will, over a lifetime, pay \$30,000 more in taxes than he or she will use in the form of social services—there are the Hollywood-run movie industry, a cruise-ship industry, and North America's closest air and sea links to Asia. Vancouver is one of the largest bulk-shipping ports on the continent, shipping out coal, sulfur, potash, natural gas, wheat, and timber products. But

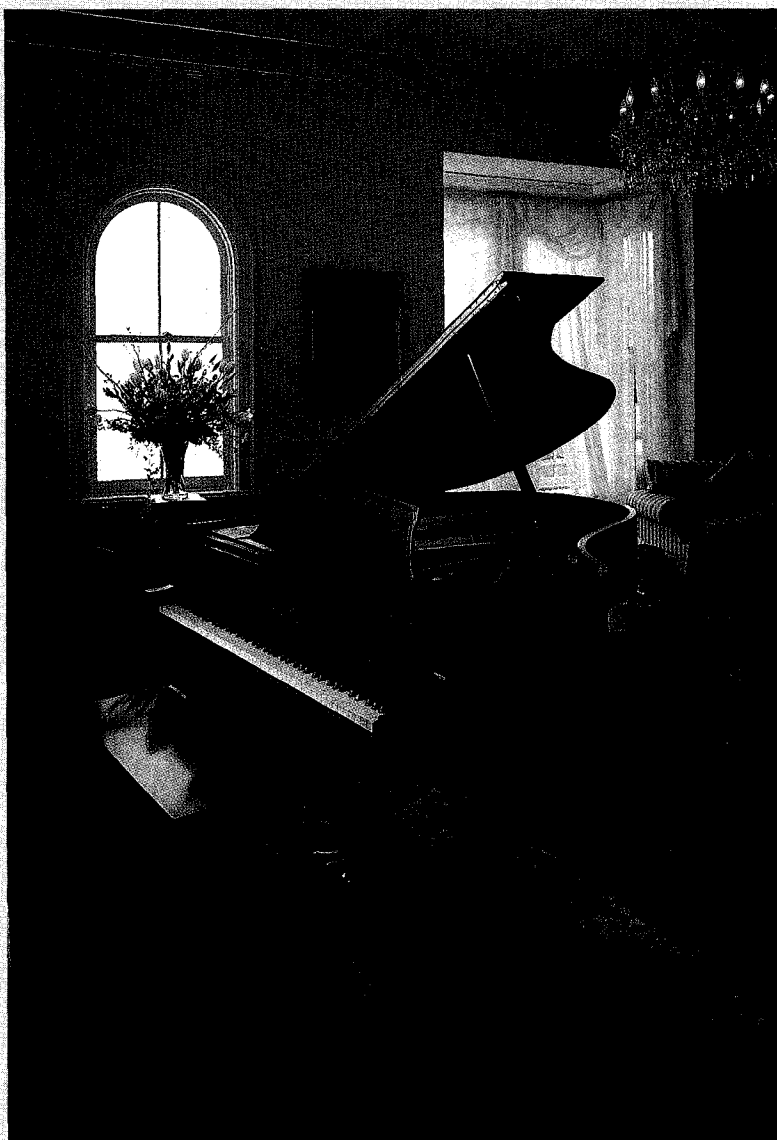
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this economy, powered by real estate and natural resources, lacks the self-sustaining entrepreneurial and creative spirit of Seattle or Portland, San Francisco or Los Angeles. There are relatively few software and multimedia companies here, for instance. Most are scared away by the high taxes necessary to support the social-welfare system.

The frontier, though, has always produced more commerce and trade than books and art. "The distinctive element of the West Coast, from Alaska to Baja, is newness," Gill told me. "Many of these places have been built not to last. There are streets in my neighborhood that have been three different things in my lifetime. At the moment the element of newness has to do with race. Interracialness is walking down the street, arm in arm. Without the Asians we'd be a narrow-minded English town. In Portland they look to Vancouver to see the outer, Pacific world—not to California or even to Seattle." Asians "are in the process of re-WASping us," Gill explained. "Through their driven work ethic they are allowing us to rediscover our Calvinistic WASP roots. In the twenty-first century hundreds of millions of Chinese and other Asians will become middle-class, tying themselves closer to North America. That will change Vancouver and the Pacific Northwest more than any development in North America itself."

GORDON Price, a member of the Vancouver City Council, picked up on that idea when we met in his apartment, in Vancouver's West End. "The Asian-British—that is to say, Asian-WASP—cultural mix," he told me, "is the most potent in the history of capitalism," notwithstanding the current Asian economic turmoil that has followed decades of economic growth. "Hong Kong and Singapore have represented the combination of British engineering, accounting, honest bureaucracy, and meritocratic government with Asian economic aggression. And it will work its magic here." Here we may be seeing something else, too: the erotization of race. As one Vancouverite told me, a walk down the street to see who's holding hands will show that whites find Asians, particularly Asian women, highly desirable.

Price took me to the city library, a multi-story maze of concrete and glass designed by the world-renowned Israeli-Canadian architect Moshe Safdie. From nearby designer shops and espresso cafés one can look into the library and see people studying. Many of them are Asian. "Vancouver is attracting the young of the world's most dynamic middlemen minorities," Price told me. "If this happens across North America, the continent will rule the world's economy. Look at these Asian kids—many of them are sent here to study by their families. For them, Vancouver must be like Paris in the twenties—an earlier, modern capitalist culture, compared with the overnight glitz of the rest of the Pacific Rim."

What struck me was the urbanity, the roar of many conversations, and the crowded cafés and walkways. Safdie's glass-

During the War of 1812 New England debated seceding from the United States. Future secessions of regions and post-urban pods from Washington's control will be more likely to succeed, because they won't have to be acknowledged.

wall design, which encourages people to look at one another, contributes to this, but the library seems to celebrate what is apparent everywhere in the city. Vancouver is a rebuke to Orange County, downtown St. Louis, and most other places in the United States, where the automobile rules and often the only people on sidewalk benches are homeless. The sea and the mountains and the international border prevent sprawl, and the Canadian social-welfare system prevents widespread poverty. The other part of the explanation for Vancouver's urbanity is a unified elite of investors and urban planners.

Paraphrasing Jane Jacobs, the classic writer on urbanism, Price told me, "People have confused overcrowding with high density. High density is actually desirable, because it means lively, safe, convenient, and interesting places in which to live." From 1956 to 1972 Price's West End neighborhood, for example, which had been overcrowded, transformed itself into a high-density area. Its population increased by about half, and the number of apartments quintupled: spacious one-bedroom apartments replaced teeming tenements. The West End now has the liveliness and sophisticated feel of Manhattan's Upper West Side. The ostensible reason for the neighborhood's success is that big businessmen took risks and built apartment blocks, while small tradesmen opened shops. Hong Kong Chinese culture, comfortable with high density, helped too. But business and culture operated within a framework of deliberate planning choices. In the United States in 1956, the same year that the West End was rezoned for taller apartment buildings, President Eisenhower signed the Federal-Aid Highway Act, which created the interstates. Consultants from Los Angeles advised Vancouver to build a freeway-and-tunnel system through the city. Vancouver citizens rejected that advice. The nineteenth-century grid pattern of narrow streets laid down by British engineers remained intact, and parks and benches, a profusion of cafés, and an explosion of tall residential buildings all followed.

"The automobile is the perfect metaphor for pure democra-

cy," Warren Gill told me, "and pure individual freedom just does not work in an urban setting. The more urban the environment, the more controls you will need to make it work. Imagine how much more vibrant and crime-free Washington, D.C., would be with more planning but without the Beltway. Imagine how if Washington had prohibited a beltway, it would have had to build a whole new layer of public transport within the city, keeping many more people on the streets at all hours."

Vancouver, of course, is not perfect. More and more affluence on display means more iron bars, break-ins, and private security. "You're in a gated community right now, though it doesn't look like one," Price told me, referring to the electronic entry system of his West End apartment block. "Much of North America, metaphorically speaking, is becoming a privatized, gated community where the only urban reality that many well-off kids see is through the sensationalism of local TV news."

Still, Vancouver has something special—a cohesiveness evinced by the never-empty streets and the interracial couples.



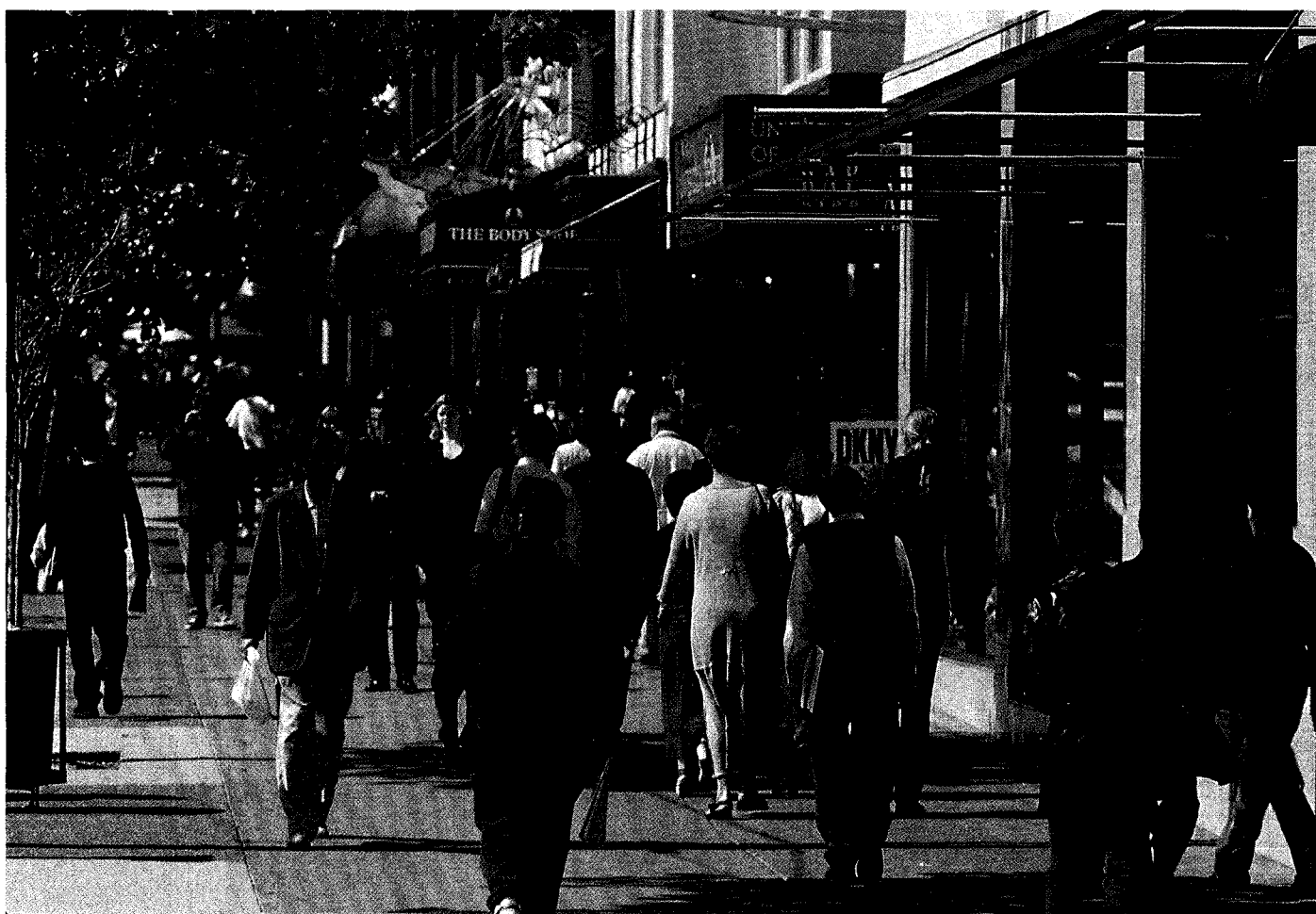
People would fight for this, I thought. No one would fight for Orange County. Put another way, an America of Orange Counties might for a time be a thriving continental archipelago of rising real-estate values, but without the spirit of patriotism that grows out of communal affection.

ALAN F.J. Artibise is the founder of the Cascadia Planning Group, an organization that assumes, without proclaiming it, the eventual breakup of Canada. Artibise, who is from Canada's heartland province of Manitoba, is a former president of the Association for

Canadian Studies and a planning professor at the University of British Columbia. He has served on numerous planning commissions. His short gray hair is receding, and his voice is soft. His expensively furnished office overlooks the harbor. There is nothing radical or even vaguely counterestablishment about him.

*Vancouver's public library (at left above)
and Robson Street (below)*

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To: Everyone
From: Larry Stopczynski

I come from a family of police officers. Imagine how I felt when my very first car was stolen from in front of our house.

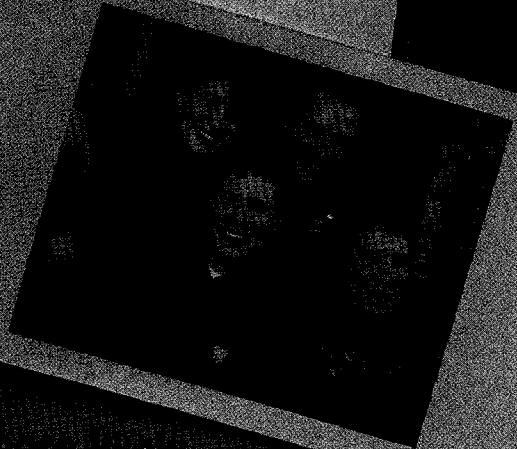
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Larry Stopczynski

Larry Stopczynski
Engineer, SecuriLock Team



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is more likely than to steal my car.

For years "Cascadia," formerly a geographic term for the Cascade Mountain region stretching from central Oregon to British Columbia, has been a trendy political concept in the Pacific Northwest. A 1975 novel, *Ecotopia*, by Ernest Callenbach, envisioned an independent nation in the Pacific Northwest; it has sold 650,000 copies. Cascadia is united by its wet, rather drowsy climate, which may account in part for the profusion of coffee bars and bookstores, and its unique ecology—a temperate rain forest boasting some of the world's largest firs, cedars, spruces, and hemlocks. Temperate rain forests are found only in slivers of coastal terrain in Japan, Chile, Scandinavia, New Zealand, and a few other places. In 1989 sixty legislators from both sides of the border formed the Pacific Northwest Economic Region; business leaders from both sides formed a group called Pacific Corridor Enterprise. More organizations, including Artibise's, followed.

What has emerged is nothing less than a strategic alliance of the business elite from Portland to Vancouver along "Portcouver," an urban corridor linked by the "I-5 Main Street" (Interstate 5 and Highway 99) and eventually to be connected by high-speed rail. (Passenger trains between Eugene, Oregon, and Vancouver already operate at 90 percent of capacity.) Cascadia would constitute a giant high-tech trading bloc, with major bulk-shipping ports in Portland and Vancouver and a container-shipping port in the Seattle-Tacoma area. Artibise said, "Cascadia is more talked about in Oregon and

and Native areas should the province leave. "All my students have been to Seattle and Portland, but never to Toronto," Artibise told me. "However, more sovereignty for British Columbia is not the answer. The province does even less for Vancouver than Ottawa does."

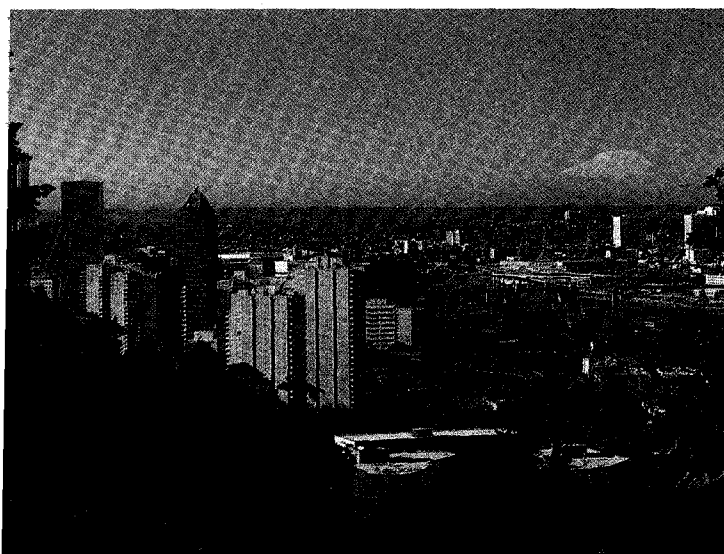
Portland: Orange County North?

PORTLAND has perhaps the most architecturally pleasing and meticulously planned downtown of any major city in the United States. The city has been lionized by liberal national magazines, while its Metro 2040 Plan—designed to extend a vital city center and prevent sprawl—has been attacked by conservative free-marketeers. In three visits to Portland I realized that although the view of liberal urban planners is the wiser one here, the conservative vision of unlimited growth is likely to triumph almost everywhere else on the continent. Beyond mere good design, culture and geography have made the cities of the Pacific Northwest more exceptional than local planners admit.

With its neat trolley lanes, geometric parks, rustic flowerpots beside polymer-and-glass buildings, crowded sidewalk benches, and cafés with modish awnings that hang from sandblasted stone and marble façades, Portland exudes a stagy perfection. "View corridors" regulated by municipal ordinances keep new construction from blocking the vistas from downtown of the Cascades and, in particular, Mount Hood. People speak in clipped accents similar to those in British Columbia. I even saw them wait in single file to cross the street at red lights. Eighty-nine percent of the population in the metro area is white: the percentage of minorities is less than half the national average, though the percentage of Asians is more than 1.5 times the national average. Portland—like Minneapolis, to which it is often compared—has the political and cultural atmosphere of a Scandinavian country, where almost everyone shares a background and values, and trusts the centralizing and controlling force of local government to preserve these things.

Not only was Portland, with its Florentine and Gothic façades, built before the car, unlike most of Los Angeles, but it was built even before the arrival of the transcontinental railroad. Abutting the city on three sides, the natural environment of mountains and rivers is ever-present in Portland and essential to its economy. Maintaining this pristine landscape is politically acceptable. Carl Abbott, an urban-affairs expert, described the city's liberal environmental politics as "status quo conservatism," because it seeks to preserve the past rather than create a future.

Ethan Seltzer, the director of the Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies, told me, "The whole point of our development plan is not to screw up our pastoral landscape, which is central to local history and culture. We seek a mythic, Native



BRUCE FORSTER/VIEWFINDERS

Portland, Oregon, and Mount St. Helens

Washington than it is here. Because of the fragility of the Canadian federation, people are more sensitive on this side of the border—they know how possible Cascadia really is. If Quebec goes, all it would take is one skilled politician to take us out of the federation. It could happen very quickly. Though they rarely admit it, many British Columbians would probably be relieved if Quebec seceded." An unnerving one in three Canadians favors the use of force to seize Quebec's English

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adaptation to place. The Natives burned the fields in the Willamette Valley once a year to keep the forest from encroaching; we must do something analogous to keep the suburbs from encroaching any more on the natural environment. And the only way to preserve the Cascade landscape while making economic use of it is to shift the economy further from agriculture and logging to high tech."

The Cascade landscape keeps Portland's new high-tech economy competitive, by providing cheap Columbia River water power for washing silicon, and the natural beauty attracts people with university degrees. High-tech products have already surpassed timber as Oregon's chief export. Twenty percent of Portland's economy is based on foreign trade, and that figure, along with high-tech production and the population of the metropolitan area, is expected to rise dramatically. By 2010 the four-county region that includes Portland and a portion of Washington just over the Columbia River will have some 1.9 million inhabitants, whereas last year it had 1.6 million.

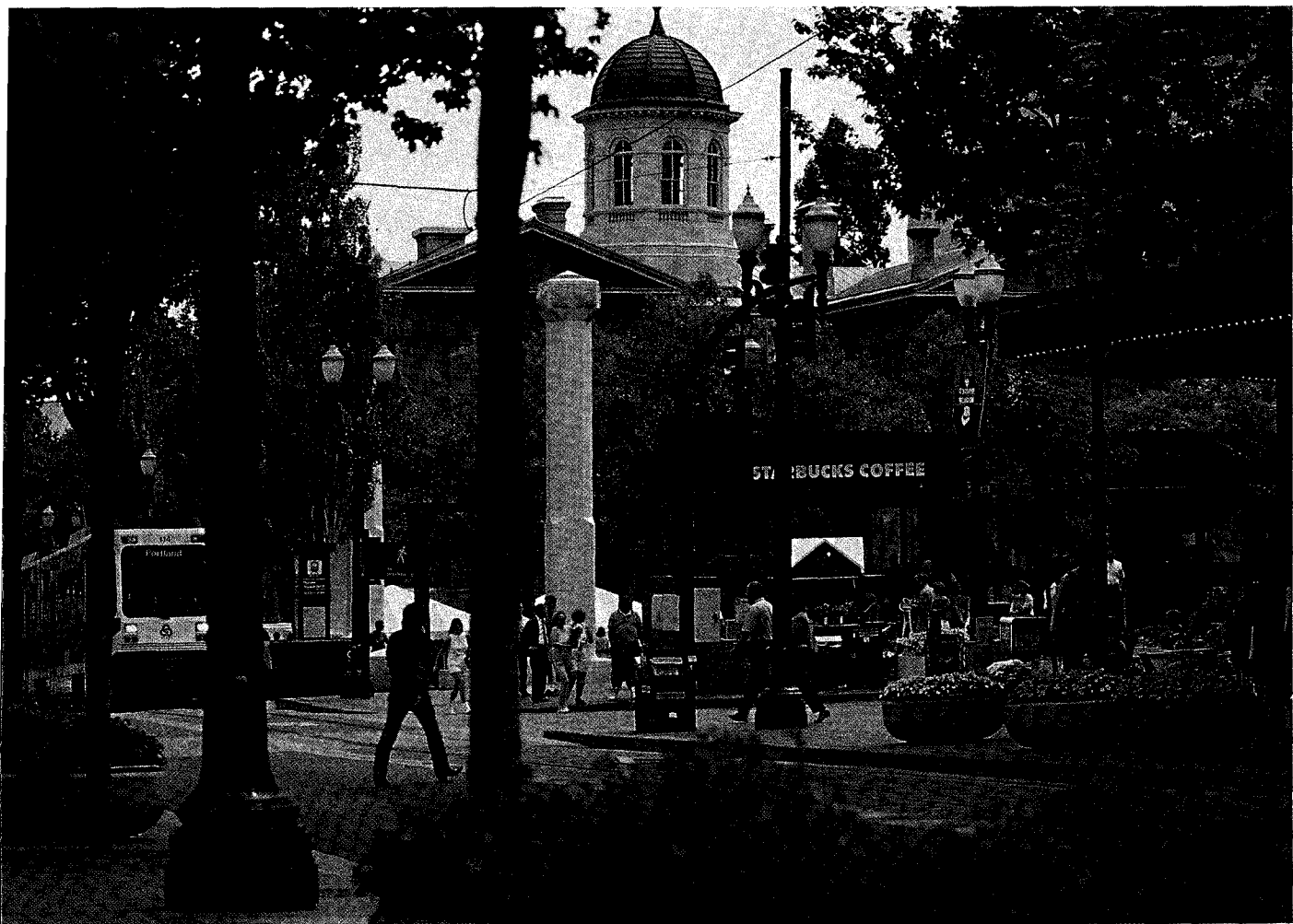
The policy mechanism by which this rapid population growth can be accommodated is the "urban growth boundary," which delineates a belt around the metropolitan area and ultimately forces developers inside it to build higher-density

neighborhoods, as in Vancouver's West End. Such a plan requires a regional government. "To preserve the environment," Seltzer told me, "we are making a transition away from city hall toward the urban region. In any case, very few urbanites in North America live their lives in one jurisdiction anymore. They live in one municipality and work in another; it's especially true with two-career couples."

This is another reason why, although the urban federation may be the future, traditional cities are fading. Manhattan, the twentieth century's premier urban location, has in recent years generated relatively few new businesses despite an impressive drop in crime and a popular Republican mayor, Rudolph Giuliani. Corporations appear to prefer post-urban pods like western Omaha. It is unclear whether Manhattan has made an authentic comeback as a twenty-first-century global meeting place or, in the words of one historian, is experiencing a beautiful Venetian sunset.

But the fading of the traditional city is not necessarily a social disaster, since all it may mean eventually is that instead of one downtown there will be many within a sprawling urban region, each performing the same socially unifying functions as the old downtowns. Even the Orange County real-estate expert Dennis Macheski said that despite our increasing ability to work at home by means of the computer, most

Pioneer Square, Portland: stacy perfection?



**The massive ministry buildings
of Washington are relics.
Federal power is waning. Henry
Adams's belief that the end of
American empire was "in no
way unpleasant" dovetails with
the gist of what people told
me in my travels.**

people will want social venues close by. It is our very humanity—our need for others—that will help us through these troubling transitions. Denver, for instance, which I recently visited, now has three thriving downtowns—Cherry Creek, “LoDo,” and downtown Denver—as it transforms itself into an urban confederation.

Seltzer and others told me that even if Metro 2040 succeeds—even if suburban sprawl in the Willamette Valley, to the south, is contained, and well-educated migrants move into high-density townhouses and “bungarows”—Portland will change dramatically in other ways. “The early settlers here recreated the New England village,” Seltzer explained. “Since then we’ve been good at space arrangement and streetscapes. Our next challenge is to get along with each other.” The white population is aging, and twenty years hence Portland will be like greater L.A. in terms of ethnicity.

The Pacific Northwest is, statistically, one of the last Caucasian bastions in the United States. Even the city of Seattle, which in 1993 elected a black mayor, Norm Rice, for a second term, has a minority population of only 15 percent—well below the national average of 25 percent. Washington and Oregon have among the lowest percentages of African-Americans in the country (3.1 percent and 1.6 percent of the population, respectively). Racism has a long history in Oregon. The state banned black immigration in 1849, to avoid the slavery question, and real-estate agents redlined the northeastern part of Portland after the Second World War, to keep blacks away from well-off whites. Given the emphasis on high tech, what is likely to happen—and what people here admit only reluctantly—is that few blacks will migrate to the Pacific Northwest but many Asians will. In effect, economic factors will enforce racial segregation, nudging Seattle and Portland in Vancouver’s direction as they trade more with the Pacific Rim.

But although Portland will become more Asian, its urban layout will come to more closely resemble that of Orange County, as Portland grows because of the semiconductor

boom, and decentralized workplaces and production centers increase the role of the car. Moreover, a recent statewide tax revolt may indicate what Metro 2040 can and cannot spend to ensure aesthetic zoning. The revolt also widened the chasm between a generally conservative state and a liberal urban-area federation in the making. Similarly, the distance between Portland and Washington, D.C., continues to grow, as is made clear by vocal criticism of Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations—“designed for East Coast cities,” in the words of a local expert, and “forced on us.”

As I contemplated the future of Cascadia, I recalled once more that during the War of 1812, New England debated seceding from the United States. Future secessions of regions and post-urban pods will be more likely to succeed, because they won’t have to be acknowledged. Our subtle new regionalism will be largely invisible. Meanwhile, the two forms of urban confederation under this refined continental imperialism—the Portland form and the Orange County form—will compete for ascendancy. Hybrid forms will emerge, perhaps even within Portland and Orange County themselves, but the Orange County model will dominate.

As a number of experts told me, we cannot ultimately control these social and economic forces. The whole New World—all of the United States, certainly—has been one big subdivision marketed for most of our history to Europeans. American cities have been built and humanized not by idealists but by tacky carpetbaggers and get-rich-quick guys. The twist has been that in some places, like Portland, this greed has had to conform to existing cultural expectations. In many other places in America the communal culture is too thin for that.

Comparing the United States to Rome, Henry Adams wrote in 1906, “The climax of empire could be seen approaching, year after year, as though Sulla were a President or McKinley a Consul. Nothing annoyed Americans more than to be told this simple and obvious—in no way unpleasant—truth.” Perhaps Adams was wrong only in his timing; the climax may come sometime in the early twenty-first century, a minor detail in the long span of history. Adams’s belief that the end of American empire was “in no way unpleasant” dovetails with the gist of what people told me in my travels, from Rick Reiff, the gregarious journalistic booster of Orange County, to Ethan Seltzer, who wants to preserve the New England qualities of Portland. They all believe that the federal power structure is waning. The massive ministry buildings of Washington, D.C., with their oxen armies of bureaucrats, are the products of the Industrial Age, when American society reached a level of sheer size and complexity that demanded such institutions. This leaden federal colossus must somehow slowly evolve into a new, light-frame structure of mere imperial oversight—for the sake of defense, conservation, and the rationing of water and other natural resources. The evolution may allow for a political silver age, though not another golden one. ☸

Par

by RICHARD BAUSCH

WHAT John Dallworth liked about it at first was being outside in the dewy morning among shade trees and perfectly cut grass, the soft peaks and swells of the Blue Ridge Mountains in the distance. He liked the sounds—different birdcalls, the tattoo of a woodpecker, the breezes in the leaves, the cleats on the cart paths, the metallic song of the clubs in the bag, the hum of the carts, even the brush-swish and rattle of the ball washers. And the smells, too—earth and grasses and pine, leather and wood, and the pungent turf-and-fertilizer odor of the carpet-smooth greens.

In the early mornings the grass looked as though it were coated with diamonds, millions of dewdrops reflecting sun. Each fairway stretched out before him invitingly, the very essence of possibility.

Of course, he had to admit that the possibilities were mostly bad for a beginner—the sand bunkers in their pristine, as yet undisturbed whiteness, and the tangled, often impenetrable woods, and the glass-smooth, slate-colored pools of water bordering one hole or crossing the approach to another. He considered these hazards beautiful, even when they cost him strokes (and he took so many strokes in the beginning). But the travails of each hole always led, finally, to the dropping of the ball into the cup—to that hollow, solid little sound, like no other in the world. And when he leaned down to retrieve the ball at the end of its perilous journey, he would imagine the polite applause of the gallery.

He told most of this to Regina Eckland on their first evening

together, and Regina found that she liked the soft, kindly baritone timbre of his voice. It was far from what she had been used to. And she began saying the things that she hoped would encourage him to ask to see her again. He did so.

Regina's friend Angie teased her about him. "Could this be love?" she said.

"Well," Regina said, "maybe it is, at that."

"You can't be serious. He's almost bald, and he spends all his time in a golf cart."

"You know, Angie, sometimes you can be pretty snobbish," Regina said. But she felt a twinge of doubt, which she tried to ignore. Her mother had expressed misgivings too. It was too soon to be jumping into another relationship, especially with a golf fanatic, a man who spent so much time on the links that his business was stagnating. Everybody had an opinion—even Dallworth's older brother, who managed the business, who had already been divorced twice, and who, in his magisterial and austere way, had counseled patience, caution. To everyone who loved or cared for them separately, they seemed headed for disaster.

And in spite of everything, this is a happy story.

Part of the difficulty was the circumstances under which they met. She lived in a small house behind a row of small evergreens along the fourth fairway of the Whiskey Creek Golf and Country Club, where John Dallworth had played dozens of times. Dallworth had sued a local car dealership for adding fraudulent charges to his repair bills. The culprit in the case, the man who ran the parts shop, was arrested for em-

She had understood that things were going wrong, and
had attributed this to the weather. His swing looked nothing like the
few she had seen on television. She wanted to
encourage him but kept silent, knowing that people kept still
while a golfer was getting set to hit the ball

bezzlement and ended up being sentenced to jail for five years. This was Regina's dangerous live-in boyfriend, Bruce. The day Bruce was sentenced, she got in her car and made the trip to the other side of Point Royal, Virginia, to thank Dallworth for the favor. They had seen each other in court, where Regina was always with Bruce, clutching her purse with

types who, when described by the women with whom they live, make others wonder what could have seemed attractive about them in the first place. Regina portrayed him as lazy, self-absorbed, bitter, bad-tempered, a felon, paranoid, and increasingly violent.

And now, thank God, a prisoner.



both hands and sitting with her perfect legs tight together.

Dallworth was astonished to find her on his front porch. Bruce, she said, was not a nice man at all, and now that he would be in the hands of the authorities for a few years, she planned to cut herself free of him.

Dallworth had discerned that Bruce was one of those

"And you're the one who got it done," she said. "I just wanted to tell you how grateful I am."

"How did you find my address?"

"The clerk of the court is a friend of mine. Angie."

"You were always over there on the other side of the aisle," he told her.

"Well, I couldn't get up the courage to show my true feelings. Bruce might've killed me."

"Really?" Dallworth was standing in his doorway with the door partly shut.

"Well, he's gone for the time being." She turned slightly and looked off. The wind lifted a few shining strands of her reddish hair and let them fall again. "He hit me sometimes."

"I'm sorry he did that to you," Dallworth said, wanting to close the door. He didn't know quite how he was expected to proceed.

She stood there, obviously waiting for him to do something.

"So," he said.

She said, "I spent ten years like that," and smiled. "I am just so grateful to you."

HE ended up taking her to dinner. They went to a small Italian restaurant in a mall, a little south of the town of Winchester. It was a sunny early evening in July. Dallworth knew the restaurant and hoped she would admire, as he did, the European feel of the place once they got inside. The waiters were all Italian; the food was northern Italian, served with an easy, familiar dexterity, and in marvelously decorative profusion. He watched her eat, and finally decided to be honest with her. "I feel odd," he said. "Do you feel odd?"

She pondered this. "Not in the least."

They hadn't gotten far with dinner before he began to hope that they were going to be more than friends. They slowly drank the wine he had ordered while she talked about her plans: getting on with life, a new job in a bank, away from the Walgreen's where she had been working for five years. She liked the idea of having someone to go places with; Bruce had been such a couch potato. Dallworth asked her if she would like to go to a movie the next evening. He felt the need to establish this while they seemed to be getting along so well.

"I'd love to," she said.

"You ever play golf?" he asked. His enthusiasm was running away with him.

"I should, given where I live." Her voice had a faintly sardonic note. "Of course, when they built the country club, they took extra care to plant those little fat pines on the border of my yard. They don't like the fact that I'm there. My little house doesn't exactly fit the profile. I've been tempted to poison the trees. But I'd never actually do a thing like that, of course."

Very gently, he said, "Would you like to learn how to play golf?"

"I don't know."

He would not push the golf if she showed no interest. He felt unsettled. He was almost forty. His one marriage had ended more than twelve years earlier, a childless waste. He wanted a family, and this feeling had grown stronger as the

decade of his thirties ran out. He had feared that it was already too late. Regina looked at him frankly, and he sensed that she enjoyed something in him over which he had no conscious control. He felt stupidly as if this evening were some sort of last chance, and inwardly he berated himself, looking at the other people in the restaurant in their relaxed poses, their settled, pleasurable sociability. He had spent too much time alone in the past year.

Now she spoke about seeing the golfers outside her bedroom window all day in the warm weather, and she speculated aloud about what they could be thinking as they shamled by, together but separate; sometimes they seemed to be playing field hockey, hacking at the ball, which just rolled along the ground a few yards at a time. To be good at it must be especially rewarding.

"Yes," he said. But he was uncomfortably certain that he was one of the people she had watched go by her window. In five years his lowest score had been sixty-six, but that was for nine holes. "Golf has a beauty," he told her, managing to sound authoritative. "It's hard to explain to someone who doesn't know the game, or play it."

Sensing that she had made him uneasy, she sought other things to talk about. Nothing suggested itself. A disconcerting silence drew down on them. She gave him her best smile, worried that he would feel the quiet as displeasure. She had wasted the past decade with a man who was exciting and harrowing and interesting when he was sober, and terrifying when he was drunk. She had stayed with him, she knew, out of a kind of recklessness that was also cowardly. For several years she had become increasingly frightened of growing old alone. That, too, had been a reason for staying with Bruce. She was not pretty in the normal sense; her face was too narrow, and her features gave her the look of a sort of continual renunciation, as though she had just declared against some abstract offense. She had tried to soften this by heightening her eyebrows and making her lips a little fuller with lipstick. Nothing worked. When she looked in a mirror, she saw the face of an irritable schoolteacher. She, too, wanted a family, and time was passing. She could not say any of this to him.

Dishonesty is not less common in love than in any other facet of life, and the person who swears that truth will be the centerpiece of his relations with others is a fool. She would be thirty-six in two months. Gazing into his almost feminine blue eyes, she realized that the sound of his voice calmed her. It actually pleased her. He had begun talking about his day out on the links.

"Someday," she said, "I'll stay home from work and wait for you in my back yard. I'll have a drink all ready for you. All you have to do is walk up the fourth fairway and step through the row of trees and there I'll be. How would you like that?"

He smiled, and hoped she'd forget the idea.

The talk—or the wine, he couldn't tell which, though he

Italy—"A Catholic friend of mine has seen a priest stop in the middle of the offertory to fish a squealing telefonino ('little phone') from his vestments."

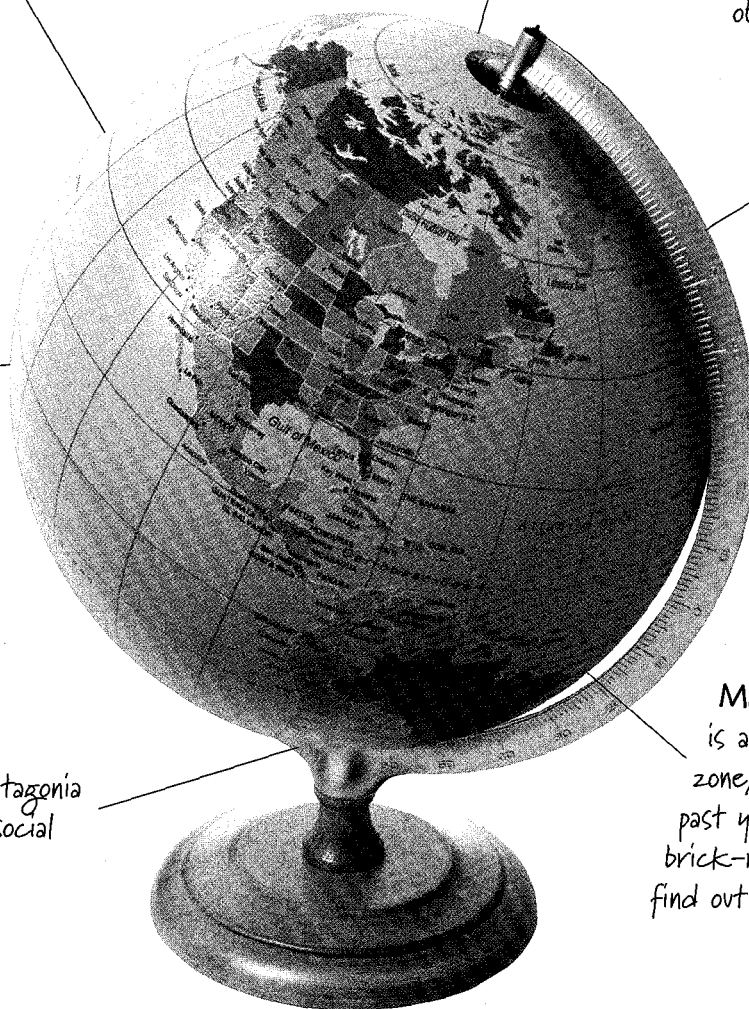
India—"Our guide told us about the ghost of Harbhajan Singh, a disappeared Indian soldier believed to roam the craggy Tibetan border."

France—"Labs are obedient and loyal, but their rambunctiousness, size, and uncontrollable friendliness make them unlikely Parisians. Or do they?"

Turkey—"Flying carpets, I saw, are more than a storybook notion."

Chile—"Hermits in the wilderness of coastal Patagonia are not necessarily antisocial types."

Madagascar—"The place is an unmitigated disaster zone, and I have spent the past year crisscrossing this brick-red island trying to find out why."



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supposed it was the latter—apparently had an aphrodisiac effect on her. He was describing the difficulty of hitting a ball on a downhill lie and getting loft on it—talking now just to keep things going, feeling increasingly uneasy about the silences—when she ran her stocking foot up one side of his leg, under the table.

“Where do you work?” she asked.

“I own this little company with my brother, you know. As they said in court.”

“I didn’t hear a lot of what went on in court,” she said, moving her foot.

He couldn’t breathe out for a second. “And—and there’s—there’s a small trust, from my mother’s estate. My mother owned a peanut farm and sold it to a corporation. My company’s a glass company.” Her foot had reached above his knee and was starting back down.

“Glass.”

“You know. For windows.”

“So you don’t have a profession?”

“Well, I have the company. It took a lot to get it off the ground. There was an awful lot to do. It pays for itself. But it doesn’t really make any money. My older brother, Mack—Mack runs it.”

Her foot stopped moving, and she sat straighter. “I don’t want you to think I’m fast,” she said.

“Everything’s okay,” he told her.

“Well,” she said. “So what else?”

He shrugged. “There’s not much to tell. In the past five years I’ve been involved in eleven civil cases—and this is the first one that resulted in a jail sentence for somebody.”

“Couldn’t have happened to a better person.”

“Does Bruce—hold grudges?” Dallworth asked her.

She nodded thoughtlessly. “Tell me more about yourself.”

“Five years seems like a long time, but it goes by awful quick.”

“Come on,” she said. “Tell me.”

His ex-wife had recently taken up with a pair of gay men somewhere on Long Island. She was a photographer. Sex had troubled her. None of this seemed worth mentioning. The marriage had come apart without rancor or particular concern. In other words, it had been a catastrophe. He didn’t know where he had gone wrong. He told Regina how many years had passed since the divorce. “It was amicable,” he said.

She watched his hands tremble slightly, and his nervousness endeared him to her. She folded her own hands on the table and smiled. “It’s been anything but amicable with Bruce.”

REGINA had no understanding of sports, and the charms of golf eluded her. She had spoken about this often. When Dallworth went off for a weekend in Canada, to play a new course, she mentioned it to her mother. He

had played almost every day for most of his thirties, spending more money than he should, even traveling to southerly climes for an occasional weekend during the coldest part of the winter. He had probably been one of those people out on the grass behind her house, she told her mother, though she had never seen him play, and had no desire to. She liked *him*. She *liked* him. Her mother wanted to know if she *hankered* for him. She used that word.

“I don’t know,” Regina said. “I felt that way about Bruce, and look what kind of life I had. This is friendly.”

HE was beginning to be in love.

When he returned from his trip, he called to tell her he had missed her, and stumbled through a few clumsy remarks about the weather in Canada, how cool the mornings were and how long the dew stayed on the grass. He came to take her to lunch, in the middle of her Monday, and he had already played eighteen holes, had teed off at six-thirty in a low ground fog, the misty dawn. She was fascinated. Having been married young and widowed young—a thing she didn’t want to talk about—and having lived with a man like Bruce, who lacked the temperament or the ability to appreciate the subtleties of anything, she had been, she now realized, fairly starved for talk, any kind of discourse, something other than the books she escaped into, or the empty racket of television. She craved simple human communication. She was on the rebound, as people say. She felt able, at last, to breathe again.

Because he was in love, he saw the circumstances of their meeting in an increasingly romantic light, as if they were characters in a film. When he talked on the phone to Mack, he always talked about Regina. Mack, who watched a lot of television, found this tiresome. Dallworth would describe what she wore and report her conversational flourishes verbatim. Her forwardness was an aspect of her charm. She was bold; she seemed to be moving under pressure. She had wide interests and a sophisticated way of discerning the heart of things. He liked to theorize about her.

“There’s a lot I don’t know about her life,” he said.

“What about the business, John? What’re you gonna do?”

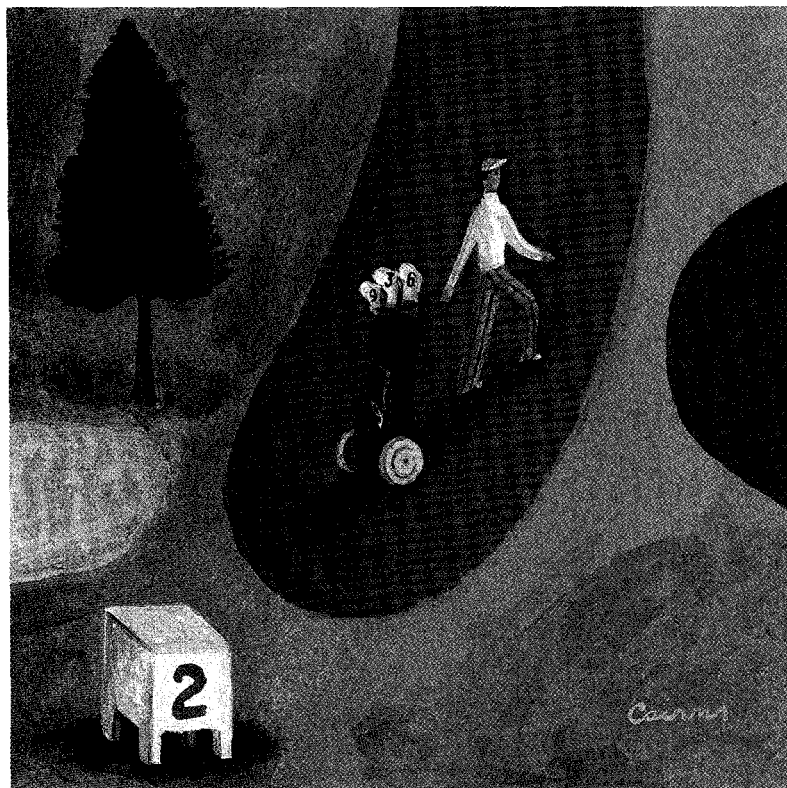
“It’s supporting itself, Mack. You don’t let me do anything but sit there and answer the phone.”

Mack had bought and outfitted a small recording studio with his share of the inheritance from their mother. This gamble had turned out to be lucrative, and Mack was paying a young woman to run the studio for him. He was amazed at how many people wanted to record themselves playing one instrument or another, or singing their own songs. Bad songs, Mack said. He kept a little book for lines from the really bad ones. In his opinion, John in his obsession with golf was a little like these would-be songwriters, all of them anxious to protect their copyrights, as though anyone would want to

steal such awful stuff. Recently Mack had taken to saying lines from the songs when his younger brother started talking about Regina.

"She's mysterious, Mack. Truly mysterious. There's things she won't talk about."

"How can I say I'm sorry when my foot is in my mouth?"



"What?"

"I love your smell."

"Mack, do you want me to stop calling you?"

"I don't want to talk about Regina, bro. Okay?"

WITH Regina, Dallworth talked about his travels to distant places to play golf. They became regulars at a Mexican restaurant, owned and run by a Bulgarian gentleman, at the entrance to the Skyline Drive. They would sit by a window, sipping red wine. She wanted him to talk; she would ask about his day, and then insist that he recount what he could remember of his round. She was learning about the game in this fashion, and for her it was much better than watching it. He would go through the day's shots, being exact and honest. Eight strokes on the par-four first hole, thirteen on the par-five second, nine on the par-four third, seven on the par-three fourth. She had a way of blinking lazily as he talked, which at first made him nervous. "You can't want me to go on."

She said, "I do too."

"You're not bored?"

"I'm not bored. I'm calm. It calms me to listen to you. I like to picture everything."

So he tried to be clear about the lay of the land—the look of things. He had discovered in himself a capacity for description. Whereas once he had talked to relieve his nervousness, now he was indulging himself, and he began exaggerating a little. Although he was scrupulous on the course about his score, when he described his day to Regina, the shots began to straighten out, the pars came with slowly increasing regularity, and birdies began to appear.

One afternoon he scored an eagle on the long par-five fifteenth at Skeeterville Trace, in Charlottesville (he actually shot a twelve, but it would have taken too long to tell her each shot, the three that he hit into the water, the two that were lost in the brush at the dogleg, the four mulligans he'd taken—the first he had ever allowed himself—to keep the number at twelve). He described for her the long, looping drive off the tee (no feeling like it in the world, he said), and the chance he took on the approach, using a three wood uphill, the ball rolling to the fringe of the green, and then the forty-five-foot putt, through tree shadows, downhill. It was all vivid in his mind, as if it had actually unfolded that way, and she sat there gazing at him, sweetly accepting.

Perhaps he had begun to believe it himself.

Regina, of course, was unimpressed. Not because she felt any superiority but because she wasn't really listening to the words. She basked in the sound of his voice, and she could listen to him without attending to the details. He was so gentle;

he was careful of her; and she liked the way his chin came to a cleft, liked the blue sparkle in his eyes, which gave her an idea of the little boy he must have been. She thought about him when she was alone, and felt glad looking forward to him, waiting for him to arrive after his day. He seldom talked about the business except to mention casually that Mack was having new phones installed, and that they were about to be audited again. Mack handled everything. Mack had been the one, all their lives, who was good at things: captain of the football team, co-captain of the basketball team, star third baseman. Mack had been born sleek, fast, quick of foot, agile, and he possessed a cruel streak, a killer instinct. John told her about him without mentioning what must have been apparent in contrast—that he himself had been too thin, too gangly and slow, almost dopey. He made self-deprecating jokes about his dreadful youth, but they were dropped into the conversation as if they didn't matter very much—as off-hand as talk about the weather. Dallworth was happy. And perhaps she had never known a really happy man before.

He spent a lot of time imagining them together, married. He considered himself old-fashioned. But finding the courage was painfully difficult. He would plan exactly how he might ask her, would head for her house with resolve beating in his

breast, and then each time they were together, he'd lose his nerve.

He would end up lying about what he had done on the golf course again.

This was beginning to bore him. It was also getting out of hand. They talked about other things, of course, and she had a way of observing people that made him a little apprehensive about what she must be able to discern in him. But they were more often glad than they were uncomfortable, and she would eventually lead him back to talking about the game, his day's game. She sat there staring, blinking slowly, with wonderful attention. He would have gone on forever to keep that soft look on her face.

THE rainy afternoon of her birthday they made love for the first time. It was exactly as awkward as she had feared it might be. But it was considerate, too, and rather more tender than had ever before been her experience. They lay quiet for a time and then began again, and she found to her surprise that she could forget herself. Later, while he held her, she told him of her early marriage—how her husband, a man she had loved and who had come with her out of her adolescence, had been killed in Australia in a freakish accident. The accident nevertheless made a certain terrible kind of sense. His name, she said—she still believed it was

PASSIVE AGGRESSIVE

It's like I just like have to kiss
a boy in every city where I am like at.
It's just so totally like I do this. Kiss.
So I am like last year? in Florence?
Italy? So weird.
I mean totally it was like so weird
I hadn't like kissed like one of them?
And I was so totally like bummed.
So I see this really like old man
at the airport and like it's what
I do so I go totally up to him and like
kiss him and it was totally like weird.
He was like twenty-seven and his wife—
it was like Like. She was like
so passive aggressive. Like sulked.
I was just like. It was like I did it?
Like totally kept my kiss list going? Weird.

—MARTIN GALVIN

purest coincidence—was also Bruce. This Bruce, her first love, had traveled to Sydney as a panel member for a conference, sponsored by an insurance group, that concerned the rates of occurrence of auto accidents under various traffic conditions and controls. Not fifteen minutes after he arrived at his hotel, he had gone out for a walk; stopping at a curbside, he had looked left, where right-lane traffic would be in the United States, and then stepped out in front of a bus, which was of course oncoming in the left lane, since this was Australia, where everything was backward.

"Well," she said, "not backward. You know what I mean." She hadn't spoken of this for a long time, and it was her thirty-sixth birthday. Her own sadness surprised her; she felt the tears come.

Dallworth hurried to say how sorry he was. Perhaps this was the opening, the chance to ask for her hand. He mustered all his nerve, took a breath, stared into her brimming eyes, opened his mouth, stopped, breathed again, and heard himself say, "I had another eagle this morning."

Somewhere in the synapses of his brain was what he'd meant to go on and say: that he wouldn't consider an eagle—or a hole in one, for that matter—to be much of an accomplishment if he couldn't have her for a wife. The absurdity of it made him stop at the word "morning," and anyhow she hadn't heard him. She was still thinking about her first love.

Dallworth was at a loss. It occurred to him that if they remained here, in this small brick house with the patter of rain on the roof, she would just grow sadder. He could not ask her to marry him while she wept over being thirty-six and a widow—while she continued to think of her first love.

The rain ran down the window. His trust-fund check wasn't due for another week. Mack wasn't giving him much income from the glass business. It would have been wonderful to say "Let's go down to Florida and play a few holes at Sawgrass." He supposed he could arrange it. But now, in the moment, the idea seemed too extreme, and even, in some obscure way, aggressive. He said, "Let's go out and play the fourth hole."

"It's raining."

"So? There's no lightning or anything."

"I've never even held a golf club." She seemed amused by the idea.

"I'll show you."

"You're kidding me."

"I've never been more serious in my life."

She stared at him.

"I've got my clubs in the trunk of my car."

She got up and walked naked to the window and looked out. The rain was streaming on the glass and made a reflection of itself trailing down her skin. She looked lovely, he thought, though somehow wounded, flawed, too vulnerable. He averted his eyes, seeming casually to glance at the clock on the wall. "Well?" he said.

*A private mansion. A girl's college.
A civil war hospital.*

Needles to say, it makes a fascinating inn.

Today was a somber day regarding Beth, one of our Martha girls, who had been caring for the Yankee officer Captain John Stoves, who was captured near the school and carried badly wounded to the third floor. It seems they formed some attachment. She might have been his strength, he called out, "Play something, Beth... Tim going." So she played her fiddle for him again as he faded. When the doctor came in, she told him, "He has been pardoned, sir, by an officer higher than General Lee. Captain Stoves is dead." Then dear Beth took the typhoid and died. Today we buried her next to Captain Stoves in the Green Springs Cemetery.



It began in 1832 as a mansion for the Preston family, then a quaint girl's college, and, briefly, a respite from the turbulence of civil war. In 1934 it was converted to an inn for retreating soldiers. Throughout the years, it has been different things to different people. But it has always been accommodating. One visit here and, needless to say, you will have your own stories to tell. A testimony to the rich history you'll find at all Camberley Hotels. Become a part of our history.



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She gazed at the grayness hanging over the wet trees, the dragging ends of clouds sailing away in the breezes. She said, "All right."

THE warm rain soaked them before they got very far down the fairway to the tee. The leaves of the maples and oaks flanking the lawns of the newer houses drooped; they looked black. A thick mist obscured the descending slope off the tee, and the sixth green, to the left, seemed half-absorbed into the whiteness of mist and ground fog. They heard traffic in the near distance, and the far-off hum of a groundskeeper's tractor. But nothing moved nearby. He carried his clubs on his shoulder, and she held on to his other arm, keeping close. He felt rather amazingly good. Her dress, a blue cotton one with short sleeves, clung to her, as did her hair, which was two shades darker than usual. She looked like a little girl. He set his bag against the wooden bench, got two Maxflis out, pocketed them, selected the driver, gripped it, and wagged it slightly. She stood a few paces away, arms folded, watching. Back in high school, when Mack was the best at all the sports, Dallworth used to watch his older brother strut and achieve for his beautiful girlfriend, who was not a cheerleader but could have been, and who was always right there, watching him. Dallworth had never been granted the experience. He propped the club against his leg and brought out his glove and a couple of tees.

"You need gloves?"

"Especially today," he said, peering off into the rain and mist, aware of her gaze on him. As he stepped up to the hitting area, he reflected that in all the thousands of attempts he had made to hit the ball right, he had rarely succeeded. Abruptly, with a feeling of terrible discovery, he knew how slim his chances were of striking the ball right under any circumstances, much less these. He hesitated, remembering, as a little spasm worked in the muscles at the base of his neck, all the lies he had told her in the past few weeks. He had not felt them as lies until this second. The rain poured over his head and shoulders, and he looked at the water-soaked ground and was afraid. He took a practice swing and felt rusty, though he had played eighteen holes that morning. Perhaps he should let her try to hit it first.

The thought came to him like a temptation, and he shook it off. Steeling himself for what he was now almost certain would be a humiliation, he gripped the ball with the tee and set it down into the soft earth.

"I'm excited," she said. The rain had drenched her. Mascara streaked her face. She looked like a crying clown.

"Here goes," he said.

She nodded. Water poured past her chin.

He stepped up to the ball, planted his feet, and then stepped back to take another practice swing. The club felt wrong; the grip was wet now. Everything ran with the rain; water beaded up on the clean aluminum shaft. He stepped back up, held his head still, and eyed the ball, its whiteness in that rainy light, thinking to keep his left arm straight. He pulled back slowly, trying to remember everything. And he felt as he reached the top of his backswing that he was going to smash it, he was going to knock it deep into the mist, the longest and best hit of his life—because this was romance, and how it ought to be, and God would give it to him. He felt it in his bones; this was something they would talk about many years from now—the perfect smack of the ball, its flight into the obscure distance.

He brought the club down with huge force and caught the wet ground about a foot behind the ball.

The club head dug into the mud, sending a shock wave up his arms. With effort he pulled it out, and as he did so, it made an embarrassing sucking sound, but he kept his balance and tried to seem casual, wagging the club head, with its clod of dirt clinging to it. The dirt looked like a wet rag. He tapped



the head against the ground twice, and the clod dropped off. There was now a deep gash in the turf. Bending down, water pouring from him, he moved the ball a few inches farther along. She was a dark-blue shape in the corner of his eye, standing very still.

For her part, she had understood that things were going wrong, and had attributed this to the weather. His swing

looked nothing like the few she had seen on television; it was too deeply swaying, as if he were trying something balletic. She wanted to encourage him but kept silent for fear of distracting him, knowing that people kept still while a golfer was getting set to hit the ball.

She was a little surprised when he turned to her.

"You okay?" he said.

She was touched that he could be worried about her at such a time, contending with the rain. Someone so serious about what he was trying to do. "Sure." She smiled.

He thought she was trying not to laugh. "Sorry this is taking so long," he said. "I'm not usually this slow."

"I'm fine."

He addressed the ball, attempting once more to keep all the instructions in his head: left arm stiff, weight evenly balanced, head still, concentrate. He brought the club back, told himself to swing easy, and shifted too much, nearly losing his balance, bringing the club around with far more speed than he had intended, and missing everything. The bright wet aluminum shaft made a water-throwing swish. He stepped back. "Another practice swing."

"You really look violent," she said.

"It's a violent thing," he told her. "The swing."

"I can see that."

This had been the wrong thing to do. He tried forgetting that she was there, and swung, and hit wide of the ball this time, taking another very large, muddy divot, which traveled a good forty yards.

She watched it arc out of sight into the mist and understood that this, too, was not a good thing. She could hear the distress in his breathing. "Wow," she said, because she could think of nothing else to say.

He wagged the club, put it up to the ball, and accidentally bumped the ball off the tee. It rolled an inch or so. "Damn rain," he said, bending to set it right again.

"It's really coming down," she said.

He swung and missed once more, hitting behind it again, another clod of mud. Now he stepped closer and, with no waggle at all, swung again. He made contact this time: the very tip of the club sent the ball on a direct line at a ninety-degree angle from him; it hit the tee marker slightly to the right of its curve, ricocheted, seemed to leap in a white trailing streak toward the ball washer, standing ten feet away and behind the tee, bounced off that, came back like a shot, and struck him in the groin.

He went down on all fours and then lay down, and she was at his side, hands on his arm, trying to turn him. For a few very awful moments he was aware only of the spreading area of pain in his middle. He held his arms around his upper abdomen, out of sheer humiliation. She was saying something but he couldn't hear it. He was sick to his stomach. The rain pelted his face, and then water poured from her hair; she had put her face down to his.

"Are you all right?" she said.

"Okay," he managed.

He did not look okay to her. She knew the ball had struck him, but hadn't seen exactly where. Because he was holding his stomach, she assumed it was there. It had all happened so fast.

"Can you get up?" she said.

"No," he said. "My ball . . ." He stopped and tried to hide what he had almost said in a gasp for air.

"I don't know where it went."

"No," he said. "Please."

"It hit you," she said. "I didn't see."

"My balls," he said. It had come out in spite of him. He wanted to sink down into the wet grass and mud and disappear. From where he lay, he could see the divots and dug-up places where he had tried to be someone other than who he was.

"Can you get up?" she said.

He found that he could. He had imagined that they would play the fourth hole and he would help her. The whole thing seemed like an idiotic kid's dream now—all of it, including ever getting any good at this game.

She was helping him to walk. "My clubs," he said. "Damn. Everything's getting wet."

"Here," she told him, moving him slightly. She got him to sit on the bench. He saw his golf club lying where he had dropped it, the ball a few feet away, and the surrounding drenched greenness.

She had placed herself on the bench next to him, and held his hands in her own. "It doesn't make any difference," she said. "Really." She now realized where he had been hit. She put her arms around him. They might have been huddled there against some great grief. The rain kept coming.

He couldn't speak quite yet.

"Someday when it's dry," she told him.

AT the house she helped him out of his clothes and got him to lie down in the bed; he lay on his side with the blanket up to his shoulder. His hair soaked the pillow case, and he began to shiver. The nausea had subsided somewhat. He remembered his clubs, and tried to tell her about them, but she had anticipated his concern. "I'll be right back," she said.

When she had been gone a few seconds, he got out of the bed and limped to the window to look out at her, beyond the little row of fir trees, making her way along the wet fairway in the rain, hurrying, her arms folded tight about her. He had never felt so naked. She disappeared into the misty, rainy distance while he watched. Then, moaning low, feeling sick again, he went into the bathroom and looked at himself, all gooseflesh. He pulled a towel off the rack and began drying his hair. He had nothing to put on, no way to get out, to get

away. In her closet he found a man's clothes—the second Bruce's clothes. They were all way too big for him. The sleeves hung down, the shoulders sagged. He put them back and went along her hallway to the dryer, his clothes tumbling there. He opened the door and looked in; they were all still very wet. Closing the door with a barely suppressed moan, he pushed the button to start the dryer again. It would be an hour at least. He struggled—he still had difficulty walking—back to the window. She was nowhere. Here was her small patio, with its wrought-iron furniture. A round table, four chairs, a closed umbrella. He saw citronella candles, an overturned glass, a statuette of a bird in flight. The gas grill had a black cover over it, like a cowl. Water ran down the sides. It all looked alien, so much not his, not home. He got himself back under the blanket and waited. His eyes burned; he discovered that he was deeply drowsy and wondered if he might pass out.

SHE had started down the fairway, uncomfortable and even irritable in the rain, wondering what would happen now. She felt oddly that some serious change would come, and she recalled how her grief over the first Bruce had included an element of anger at him for getting killed in that bungling way. She had always felt guilty for that unacceptable emotion, and perhaps she had put up with the second Bruce's casual mistreatment of her as a kind of atonement. Nearing the fourth tee, she had an image of Dallworth flailing at the ball on its little yellow tee; it made her begin to laugh. She couldn't help herself. She went to the bench and sat down, sopping wet. She put her hands to her face and laughed helplessly, almost hysterically, for what seemed a long while. She would have a hard time explaining what had taken so much time. But she felt confident of his kindness, his wish to please her, and anyway, she couldn't move. The muscles around her rib cage seized up, and she went on laughing.

Finally she picked up the club and the ball and dropped them into the bag. Then she began trying to haul it back to her house. For a slow, pouring, almost painful five minutes she moved in the heavy mist and rain, surrounded by the soft, sodden, close-clipped grass; the base of the bag, like a plough's blade, created a dark mud streak behind her. She didn't care. Her back ached; her arms felt as though they might pull out of their sockets.

She set the bag of clubs under the eaves above the patio and stepped inside, dripping. She found him curled up in her bed. "I'm gonna take a shower," she said. "Want to join me?" He was asleep. She stepped to the edge of the bed, gazed at him, and then reached down and shook his shoulder, more roughly than she had meant to. "Hey."

He rose up out of a dream of being jostled in a crowded place and was startled to find her looming over him, water

beaded on her face and running down her jaw, hair matted to her cheeks. He noticed that her ears stood straight out from her head, and for some reason this made him ache under the heart. He almost reached up and touched her cheek.

"I'm sorry," he said. "It was all a lot of lying."

"What?"

"I'm not any good at it," he told her. "I'm awful. And I'm not getting any better."

"You're okay," she told him.

She went in and took a brief shower, toweled off, and put on a bathrobe. She found him still in the bed.

"Those other clothes are all too big for me," he said, and began to cry.

This surprised them both. She got into bed with him and held him like a little boy. When he had gained control over himself, he said, "I don't know."

She resisted the urge to be sharp with him. She said, "John, are you physically damaged?"

He turned to look over his blanketed shoulder at her. "What do you mean?"

"Do you need a doctor?"

"I don't think so, no."

"Do you know what aspect of golf I've never understood and would like to understand?"

He waited.

"Putting."

"I'm not much good at it," he told her with a disconsolate sigh.

"I've heard people say it's the hardest thing."

"I thought Bruce never played."

"Let's not talk about him—or anybody named Bruce," she said.

A moment later he said, "It is hard to do—putting."

"And I bet you could show me a lot."

He understood perfectly well what she was doing now, and he knew that he would never question it or examine it very closely. She lay breathing into the base of his neck, here, under the blanket, her arm resting on his abdomen, the elbow causing the slightest discomfort, but she was a friendly presence, trying to give him something. He said, "Can I stay here tonight?"

"You know you can."

He shifted a little, and she moved her arm so that her hand rested on his hip. "If the rain stops, maybe in the morning we can spend some time on the practice green," he said.

She murmured, "That would be fun."

They went to sleep at almost the same time, and dreamed separately, of course. She saw herself leading children through a sunny field of flowers, and many of them were misbehaving, breaking the stems off. He dreamed that he was dreaming in her bed while she emptied the closet of clothes that were, as things often are in dreams, outlandish, out of all scale, and too big for any normal man. ☼

“Invent Radium or I’ll Pull Your Hair”

by DORIS DRUCKER

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

*Set in the Germany of the Great War and the years after, this is the story
of how young Doris Schmitz fought for independence
from her Prussian mother, got an education, and fell in love with
an eloquent young Austrian named Peter Drucker*

LIKE every young child, I spent the first two or three years of my life outside time. There was no present, because every present is defined by a past and a future. Life was a number of still photographs, of events not subject to the dimensions of time. Space was real; I touched the door, the boundaries of a room, and the things that were in it—things that stood still, and things that moved. “Quick,” my mother called, “the Zeppelin.” A large silvery object floated through the air, way up, higher than all the houses. The people in the street cried, “Look at the people in the sky waving to us from the Zeppelin!”

“I saw the Zeppelin,” I told Old Anna, who was my nursemaid.

“So you did,” she said. “What did it look like to you?”

“It was a big bird,” I said. “Bigger than the swans that flew away with the little girl in the fairy tale.”

I saw an automobile. Automobiles had been invented years before but were still enough of a rarity to attract onlookers in villages like the one where we vacationed the summer before the First World War. “Look at the automobile!” my mother exclaimed. “It moves by itself.” Actually, it didn’t move at all. It sat in the middle of the town square. Two men in strange clothes ran around what looked like a cart and tried to take it apart—or at least they tore off a lot of pieces and then put them back on. We watched them run around for a while. I wondered

why it took so long for the horses to be fed and watered. Eventually a man came with some horses, and they pulled the “cart” away. I knew it all along—you needed horses to get any cart to move.

The Zeppelin and the automobile appeared and disappeared in my hazy world. Sometimes the clouds would lift, and through undefined openings I would slide into another universe.

I was in a large building with an immensely high ceiling. There was a peculiar musty smell. Old Anna knelt down next to me. Then she got up and went away, and when she returned she had folded her hands across her stomach. Years later they told me that Anna, who was supposed to take me for a daily “airing,” always stopped for mass in the cathedral. And what I remember as a singular event is probably a composite of many such visits.

The clouds opened up once again when I saw my mother and many other people running up and down a short steep hill that

led from our house into the woods. While they were running they shouted “Mobilization!” and many more people came out of their houses and joined in. They all kept running up and down that hill. I was bewildered: I had never seen grown people run.

And then we were in a large room with a table set for a meal. Many people were bustling around, pushing chairs and creating a lot of unrest. An old man with a beard came in



The author at seven

and sat down, and then everybody else sat down too. My mother and the other people ate in silence. I kept looking at all the strangers around the table. My baby sister, in a high chair, was banging a spoon against a plate. Suddenly the old man, who was my grandfather, fixed his gaze on me and addressed me in a threatening voice: "Why are you staring at me like that with your big saucer eyes?" I didn't know what I had done to make him so angry, and I began to cry

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"QUICK," MY MOTHER CALLED, "THE ZEPPELIN." A LARGE SILVERY OBJECT FLOATED THROUGH THE AIR.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

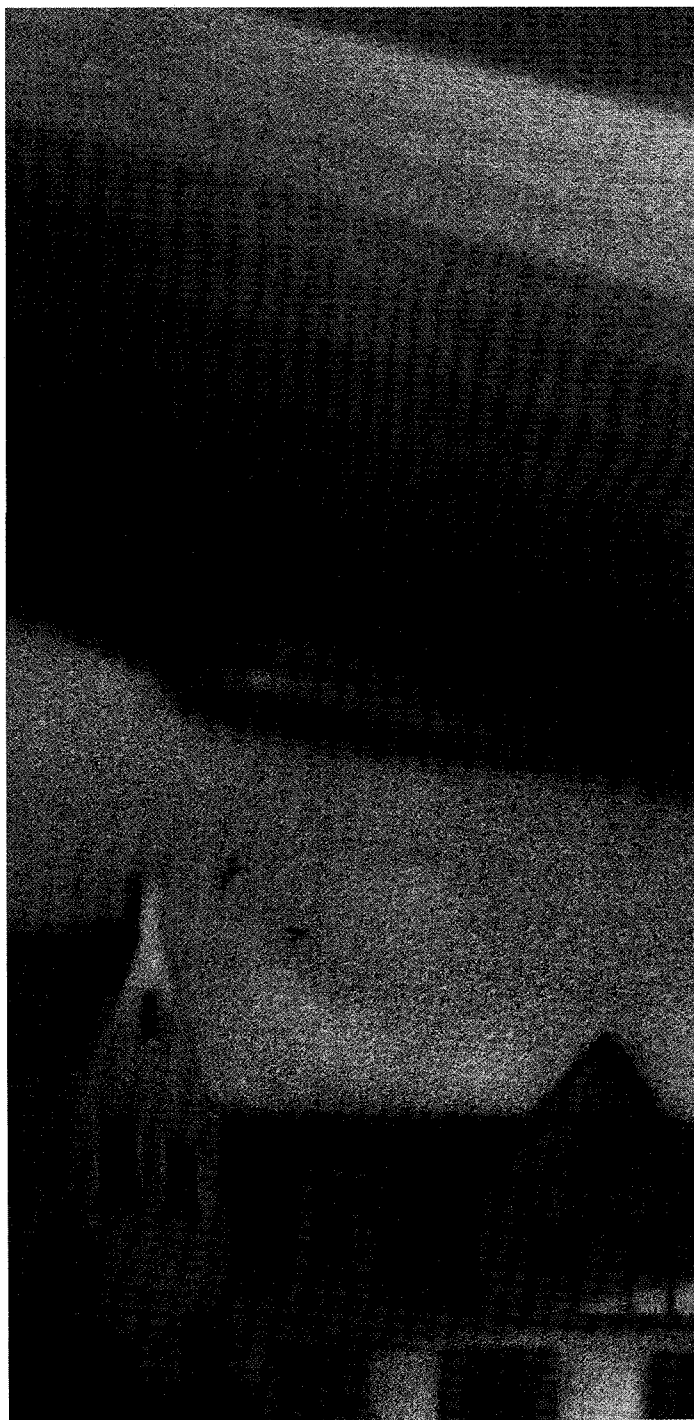
Cologne, which was my father's home town and where he was in business. After her arranged marriage, at age twenty, to a man for whom she didn't care in the least, my mother was determined to dislike everything about Cologne. And when my father, and his income, disappeared at the outbreak of the war, she closed up the household and moved with us children back to her parents' home—supposedly for only a few months, till our "heroic boys" had beaten the French and the British and the Belgians and the Russians. Nobody could have foreseen that our visit would stretch into a four-year stay, lasting until the First World War ended with the decisive defeat of Germany.

Worse for me than the banishment to the *Katzentisch* (literally, "cats' table," meaning a low table in a corner where little children ate by themselves) was the traumatic ejection out of my shell, where things happened in no particular sequence. Suddenly there was time, cause, and consequence. In self-defense I constructed a timeless world inside me that I did not have to share with anybody. My family and the servants and the few other people I knew all fitted in, and so did the streetcars, the Rhine River, and the flocks of birds that flew around the church steeples. All that had a real and figurative existence inside me. What or whom I did not like was left standing outside and disconnected. The only problem was how to get the war into my inner space—the soldiers and the horses and, above all, the huge cannons. They did

loudly. My grandfather threw his napkin down and jumped out of his seat. "I can't stand that noise—are we going to have that every day while they are here?" My mother and her sisters quickly whisked us children away, and we never ate with the family again until we were ten years old or so, except three or four times a year, on festive occasions.

My grandfather's outburst happened on the day of our arrival at his home in Mainz for "the duration"—after my father had been called up for the army.

Before that my parents and my baby sister and I lived in



belong, of course: the war was our natural environment, in which everything took place. At night I fell asleep trying to solve this problem.

"Lieb Vaterland"

THE war was everywhere, all over the world. War was part of the universe, a permanent configuration that sometimes moved from one country to another. We did not know that when the war settled in anywhere, it devastated the country and smashed everything to pieces—trees and houses and people, everything. How could we have



known? Mainz, so close to the French border, had been invaded many times by the French during the past centuries, but the shot-up buildings had been repaired, and the only remnants of the Napoleonic Wars were the many French words sprinkled throughout the local language. Germany, the aggressor, had carried the First World War into France and Belgium, shot up buildings and ferociously torn up the landscape at an unspeakable cost in lives. But for now our houses were standing, the railways were running, and children played in the streets. We sang, "*Lieb Vaterland, magst ruhig sein, fest steht und treu die Wacht am Rhein.*" The enemy would be held at bay.

Sometimes the sounds and sights of war came closer; for us children they were nonthreatening and even interesting diversions. Outside town we lay on the ground and listened to the booming cannons shooting off round after round on the Western Front.

We stood by the window and watched a small plane circle lazily over the rooftops. Suddenly it dropped a dark object; there was a loud bang, and my mother came into the room and said we should get away from the window.

Night air raids were more interesting; our blackouts were of course quite ineffectual. The enemy could easily find a city like Mainz, at the confluence of the Rhine and Main Rivers, by

reflection from the water. So whenever a French plane approached at night and dropped a bomb or two, the sirens began to blare, and we were bundled up in blankets and carried down to the cellar, where all the tenants were assembled. We were fascinated to see the tasseled nightcaps on the men's heads, and the ladies' hairpieces in unfamiliar disarray. Even more astonishing was the temporary suspension of rules of behavior: the tenants from the first floor, a retired major and his wife, actually deigned to talk to us civilians. Under normal circumstances such familiarity would have been most unusual; in the pecking order of Germany before the war a member of the officer corps was a near-deity, subject to a code of behavior that precluded communication with ordinary people.

Of course, the cellar shelter was only for the gentry, not for the servants. I suppose they were considered to be dispensable in their attic chambers, though the gentry would have been quite dismayed if the maids had been bombed out and unable to serve breakfast as usual the next morning.

I don't remember that the planes did any damage—certainly not in comparison with the inhuman onslaught of the Second World War. At least, the adults thought that the invasion of our airspace was just an annoyance, and quite insignificant in light of our army's alleged gains on all fronts. Swept off their feet by waves of patriotism, everybody believed that victory was all but assured, and the pins on the war map in the hall were triumphantly moved outward, toward France and Belgium in the west and toward Poland and Russia in the east, wishfully marking our forward positions in enemy country. When people met in the street, they called out the names of cities or of battles: the Marne, Reims, Verdun, Lille. We did not understand what it was all about, but like all children, we were happy when our families were happy.

One day we came home from a walk and found a soldier in the living room. "Come in," he cried. "Remember me? I'm your dad." We stood by the door and looked at our mother. "Come sit on my lap," the soldier said. "No, no," my mother cried. "It's all right," the soldier said. "I have been through delousing." Dutifully we moved toward him. He showed us a photo of himself on a horse by way of explanation of what he did in the war. He was a paramedic who had to pick the horribly mutilated dead and half-dead off the barbed wire that was strung between opposing trenches. Like all soldiers on the Western Front, he lived for years like a rat, and with rats as steady companions, in the muddy trenches that ran for miles through Belgium and northern France. It rains a lot in that part of the world; for weeks on

end the soldiers lived in dampness, unable even to change into dry socks, having nothing to eat except mildewy rations. Day and night they were exposed to the unceasing noise of gunfire and artillery shells close by—hell on earth. But my father never talked of what he had seen, then or later on. And when his furlough was over, his disappearance was as inexplicable as his arrival had been.

My uncle Carl's furlough was far more colorful. One

fine day he appeared out of the blue at the head of a train of hand-pulled carts, each of which was loaded with cages of chickens and geese, sheep and goats. "Carl," my grandmother cried, "what is all this?" "Liberated from the Balkans," Carl said cheerfully. He told us that he had traveled for five days in a cattle car with the entire menagerie in order to feed and water "his" animals and protect them from other "liberators." Finally arrived in Mainz, he had hired the carts at the railroad station. "You walked through the whole town with that zoo?" my grandmother asked incredulously. "Sure did," Carl said. My grandmother was appalled; people would talk. "Let them," Carl said. "At least you'll have some meat to eat."



With Old Anna

We were thrilled with the small zoo, which was kept for the time being in a nearby cobblestone yard. We rode around on the sheep and fed the chickens and watched the animals disappear one by one. We overheard the adults saying "Don't tell the children," but we were so delighted with the portions of meat on our plates that we refrained from asking where they came from.

The Allies' blockade of Germany cut off virtually all food imports; rice and grain and meat, tea and coffee, oranges and everything else that was not grown at home, disappeared. And when the German peasants were put into uniform, domestic food production fell off sharply. Without tractors or other farm machinery, women and children could not manage the backbreaking work: ploughing was still done with oxen, grain was cut with scythes, and hay bales were lifted by hand into the barn lofts. We ate potatoes and turnips and bread that was half sawdust. Our milk was almost transparent, because it was diluted with so much water. Though I did not mind the quality, I did mind that there was so little of everything. We were not starving, but we were always hungry.

To supplement the meager rations we went foraging in the summer and fall. In vacant lots and alongside the roads out of town we picked stinging nettles and thistles that were cooked as vegetables, rose hips that were seeded and made into jam, bramble leaves that were dried and used for tea,

and chicory for coffee. Unfortunately, most of these weeds were (and undoubtedly still are) richly endowed with thorns and spines, which went right through our thin gloves.

"You poor children," the aunts said. "You have never eaten a banana or an orange in your life. Before the war . . ."

"Before the war" meant for us an unfathomable past. Was it then that giants lurked in the hills, Red Riding Hood went to visit her grandmother, and the animals in Aesop's fables talked to one another? For all we knew, the war had imperceptibly evolved from time immemorial and would now stay with us forever. One day my mother went around with a grim face muttering to herself, "America has come in—that's the end for us." We children didn't believe it, of course; reality and the Grimms' fairy tales had the same tense, and "the end" meant "they lived happily ever after."

The Servants

THE outbreak of the war had overwhelmed my grandparents. They were not really old people—both were in their late fifties—but in those days people of that age were considered old, and they felt old and entitled to enjoy serene sunset years. Instead they were faced with the departure of their only son and half a dozen close family members into the army, general disorder, food rationing, restrictions on everyday life, and the arrival of my mother with two little children who had to be taken in.

It can't have been easy for my mother, either, to be a guest in her parents' home, though the drawbacks of the situation were probably greatly compensated for by her relief at being away from Cologne and her husband. Besides, there was none of that "two women in one kitchen" syndrome. My grandmother was an excellent and well-organized hausfrau, whereas my mother loathed any domestic activity. It suited both of them that my mother would take care of us children and my grandmother would run the household, assisted by a full complement of servants: a cook, a parlormaid, at least two under maids, a cleaning woman to "do the floors," and a laundress who came every other week. The laundress was followed the next day by an ironing girl and a seamstress for mending things. Every morning a barber appeared to shave my grandfather, and a hairdresser to arrange my grandmother's hair. When my grandmother went marketing, she was accompanied by one of the maids with a hamper to carry the food. When she traveled—as a matter of fact, when anybody in the family traveled—a porter and a cart were summoned to bring the luggage to the station; the travelers followed in a hired horse-drawn cab. A maid in

charge of coats and other paraphernalia usually accompanied the travelers on the train.

By present-day standards domestic servants were grossly exploited; they had no eight-hour days or any of the fringe benefits now taken for granted. On the other hand, the mistress of the household considered it her duty to look after the servants' physical, and especially their moral, well-being. On Sunday afternoons the "fiancés" sat stiffly in the kitchen waiting for their betrotheds to finish their chores. My grandmother would never allow any girl to go off with a young man who was not a serious suitor. Servants did not have any sense: they were impulsive, like children, and could not be trusted. Everything in the household was locked up. In the morning the cook presented a list of what she would need that day: flour, sugar, and so on. My grandmother would fish out a key from the basket she always wore at her side, unlock whatever cabinet held the wanted articles, dole out the required amounts, and lock up again. When her first child was born, my grandmother also employed a wet nurse—that was Old Anna, who stayed on to look after the next children and who was later replaced by a part-time governess who supervised the children's homework.

A wet nurse was usually a village girl who had gotten herself "into trouble." As soon as her baby was born, it was given away to an "angel maker" (a woman who starved to death the babies in her care), and the young mother was hired out as

a wet nurse. Her employers plied her with beer and ale and lots of rich food, to make the baby fatter and fatter—in those days a sign of enviable health. Well-to-do mothers preferred to have their babies nourished by a wet nurse: it was much more convenient than having to be on tap around the clock. Besides, breast-feeding was considered degrading, as if one were a sort of milch cow. For mothers who could not nurse their babies a surrogate was a necessity, because there was no such thing as formula to feed newborns.

It would have been unthinkable for anybody in the family to do "maids' work"; the only exception was an occasional bout of cooking, which could be considered a hobby. Anything else would have been downright immoral: what would happen to the poor if

they were replaced in their servants' roles?

We never, ever, made our own beds, and until I was in high school I didn't know anybody among our acquaintances who did. A classmate, recounting some catastrophe in her family, mentioned that it had forced her mother to make the beds for a week. "Your mother made the beds?" we asked incredulously. It must have been a severe crisis.

For all their labors the servants earned a pittance, but at

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least they were fed when the alternative was to starve at home in a village. The young women worked hard, but life in the city was less cruel than in the villages. In the city the fuel, coal or wood, had to be carried upstairs from the cellar to stoke the kitchen stove and the tile ovens in every room (there was no central heating), and every day the ashes had to be carried downstairs. But at least all the hauling was done inside, protected from the weather. In the village water was fetched from a spring or a fountain, sometimes a long distance away. In the city it came from an indoor tap.

There were other advantages. Instead of remaining isolated villagers, the peasant girls who went into domestic service became a part, albeit a minor one, of urban society. They were nodes in a far-flung information network through which all news and gossip flowed. Servants knew everything about everybody. It was impossible to hide anything from them. They did not have to listen or look through keyholes. They absorbed, almost by osmosis, everything that went on behind closed doors. My grandmother switched to French—“*Tais-toi, les domestiques!*”—when somebody inadvertently mentioned a subject the family did not want to have spread around, and everybody shut up till the serving maid had left the room. It did not make the slightest difference. Within five minutes the entire kitchen staff knew.

For servants, gossip was like money in the bank, a tradable commodity, which at the very least earned an employer's good will. If a family was made aware of a rumor, or of the likely consequences of one member's imprudence, it might be possible to contain the damage before the matter became a scandal. Servants had good reason to protect “their” family: any threat to the family's well-being, reputation, or general stability was also a threat to their own future.

Many years later, when I was at the university but still living at home, the parlormaid became keenly interested in the company I kept; she assumed that in all likelihood my future husband would come from that group. Whenever fellow students, girls or boys, came to our house, she inspected the labels inside the coats they hung on a rack in the hall. Then she reported to my mother, who relayed Johanna's reasoned opinion that “Miss Doris ought not to associate with those *Herrn und Fräulein Studenten*. They are a grubby lot. Their coats come from really cheap stores—no good.” “Johanna is absolutely right,” my mother would say. “You will ruin all prospects for a proper marriage if you run around with those dowdy people.”

A Teutonic Upbringing

MY mother's model for bringing up children was the regime of the Prussian Army. Indeed, she often told us that her secret dream had been to become an elementary school teacher in East Prussia, the very center of a culture that demanded blind obedience and strict discipline. “Why didn't you?” we wanted to know. “Because it would have ruined grandfather's credit,” she said. If a well-to-do businessman allowed a daughter to take a paid job, it could only mean that he was near bankruptcy and could not support her. “And I didn't want to get married so young, either,” she continued. “But I had to.” Her sister Lisbeth, who was next in the birth order, was a beauty. But Lisbeth, for whom the family expected to find a rich husband, could get married only after my mother had been married off. Otherwise people

would have talked: “What's wrong with the Lahnsteins? If they can't find a husband for Clara, it can only mean that she is suffering from a physical or mental ailment. Of course, those things run in the family, and in all likelihood Lisbeth has the same disease. . . .” Nobody asked whether my mother liked Fritz Schmitz, the man her parents told her to marry. She had not even met him before he came to her parents' apartment and gave her an engagement ring.

Frustrated but still bound by the contemporary mores, my mother simply transferred her vision of herself as an East Prussian schoolteacher to the Mainz environment. She worked on our education as if we were young army recruits. We were trained to carry out unquestioningly whatever she ordered

us to do. We were not allowed to have, let alone express, an opinion on anything, to make even the slightest decision about what to wear, or even to speak up. When an aged great-aunt asked something like “What's the name of your favorite doll?” my mother threw us a threatening look that meant we were not to answer but to let her speak for us. When somebody offered us a cookie, my mother declined: “No, thanks, the children are not hungry.” I was starving, but I would never have dared to speak up and say so.

It was a stultifying life—no spontaneity, no chance to stretch our horizons, no encouragement to explore, only a constant insistence on fitting in, being inconspicuous, and, above all, doing our mother proud. We were to be the neatest, quietest, and best-behaved children in all of Mainz. Like many people of her generation, my mother admired the Victorian ambience, or at least its idealization: we were supposed to look and behave like those imagined well-bred



Clara Lahnstein,
the author's mother

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English children. My hair was rolled up in stiff paper curlers every night (I still remember how hard it was to find a sleeping position that did not give me a headache) and combed out into long curls in the morning. Even in summer we wore long-sleeved and high-necked dresses; when other children played in a sandbox, we had to sit on the sideboards lest sand get on our white batiste dresses.

I don't remember whether we had a gramophone. The only music in our lives came from occasional military bands or itinerant organ-grinders. The latter's arrival lured everybody to the windows or, if possible, down into the streets or courtyards where the musicians performed. An organ-grinder always traveled with a small monkey that was trained to circulate in the audience and beg for donations. In his paws he carried a little hat in which he collected the coins that people threw down on the pavement. There were also movies, but, as my mother said disparagingly when her younger sisters went once in a while, they were "entertainment for the proles," not worth an educated person's time. In any event, I don't think there were movies for children.

We didn't have much physical exercise either—the kind that stretches one's muscles and develops coordination. Girls were not supposed to exercise, but since there was so little food, exercise would have been discouraged anyhow, because physical effort stimulates appetite. On the few occasions when we were taken swimming in the Rhine, we came home ravenous, so these excursions were discontinued. In retrospect it was probably a good thing; even then the Rhine

was heavily polluted, though it had not yet become the sewer it is today. Nevertheless, at the riverbank there were swimming installations—basically floats with cutout center sections that constituted the "pools." We went into the water upriver and drifted along with the strong current to the other end. There we got out, walked back, and let ourselves be carried

downstream again, over and over. There was no children's wading basin; with cork rings tied around our middles we just went in upstream like everybody else and drifted downstream. I suppose men were able to swim against the current, but we never saw them do so, because there were separate swimming times for men and women. Ten years or so later a few hours were set aside for "family swimming," but it was a racy young woman who would venture to ap-

pear. Certainly no married woman would, with or without her children.

With its emphasis on learning, the family exposed us early and eagerly to great literature. We were introduced to the poetry and plays of Schiller and Goethe almost as soon as we came out of diapers. I can't have been more than five or six years old when I was drilled to recite like an automaton the entire Easter Parade passage from Goethe's *Faust* on the occasion of my grandfather's birthday.

My mother was devoted to Heinrich von Kleist, a fine writer of the early nineteenth century who is now all but forgotten. One of his stories, "Michael Kohlhaas," appealed to her especially, because it was about a man who ruined himself in the process of fighting "the system"—an endeavor that, I think, my mother wished she had the courage to pursue. I found the subject incomprehensible but didn't dare to say so—after all, it was a "classic." One whole summer long, for bedtime stories we were read the exploits of the Red Baron, Von Richthofen, one of Germany's most daring air aces: "Then I was on Frenchie's tail, and with a burst of my trusty machine gun . . ." I can't for the life of me understand why our mother thought that was appropriate bedtime reading.

Were we scared of the violent dogfights, or of the brutal joy of the killer when he hit a target? I can't say. The stories were about singular, bewildering events that I could not connect with anything I knew or felt.

We enjoyed the Grimm Brothers' fairy tales, although the surrealistic adventures of the personae puzzled us occasion-

ally. How did it happen that the Big Bad Wolf did not take bites out of Red Riding Hood and the Grandmother before he swallowed them? According to the story, both emerged hale and hearty from their unpleasant confinement in the wolf's belly and immediately fell to consuming cake and wine. Too bad that child psychologists have "cleansed" the



Returning German troops cross the Rhine near Mainz, 1918

stories in the Grimms' magic kingdom of what they see as shocking cruelties. We were eminently satisfied that the bad people had it coming to them. As soon as we knew how to read, we were given the (unabridged) *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*, along with the Nibelung saga, probably for the purpose of keeping us occupied for months with those interminable books. We were supposed to be absorbed by the adventures of the various characters; instead I found the tales fundamen-

tally depressing. Neither Zeus nor Wotan and his assorted offspring had any moral or ethical standards; as gods they ought to have known better.

But gruesome as the myths and epics were, they did not scare us; we took them to be part of our European heritage. We grieved for the slain Siegfried and for Prometheus, who was so horribly punished for bringing fire to the human race: Zeus had him shackled to a rock and sent an eagle every day to hack away at his liver, which would mysteriously grow back overnight, so that the eagle could start over the next day on his demolition job. But grieving is not the same as trembling with fear. I do not recall that I was ever frightened even of ghosts or ogres; nor was I afraid of the dark, as so many children are. Actually I sympathized and more or less identified with the fellow in one of the Grimms' tales who left home and traveled the land to learn what fear was.

The only fear that haunted us was of my mother's rage when we did something to displease her. There was no worse terror.

The Enemy's Bread

ALTHOUGH I recall the day the war broke out, I was too young to recognize what it meant. Four years older when it ended, I was deeply affected by the visible signs of the army's defeat—so much so that they stayed with me as the most dramatic experience in my life.

It started with footsteps in the street. One evening, when we were already in bed, we heard them—listless, shuffling—on the cobblestones. They kept on and on till we fell asleep; and when we woke up the next morning, people were still walking. The war was over; the Mainz bridge across the Rhine was one of the main return routes for the army that had been defeated in France and Belgium. "Like Napoleon's army retreating from Moscow," my grandfather said, and he pulled out a picture showing frozen bodies in the Russian wasteland. "And the officers fled in comfort and let the poor guys die," he added, "just like now." Indeed, the officers had commandeered cars and horses and trains and had run back home ahead of the common soldiers, the cannon fodder, who had to slog their way through the cold and rainy November in their dilapidated uniforms and worn footwear. Some years ago I read that the army came back in good order while bands played marching songs. But I don't remember hearing any music—just the monotonous parade of those sad wretches walking along day and night. Don't they ever sleep? we asked. Perhaps in empty barns or in wet fields outside town—no one knew. The wounded who were not able to walk lay in rough wooden carts pulled by skeletonlike horses. Their blood-

stained bandages were filthy; many were without arms or legs; others had only huge bandaged lumps where their heads should have been. It was a horrible sight. How those poor men must have suffered on that wearying ride! Along the main street the Red Cross handed out coffee, wine, and soup. The soldiers took the mugs and drank as they walked on; we children had to run alongside and bring the empty mugs back. My mother, who had saved a small bottle of brandy from I don't

know when, stood with us in the street and watched the rows upon rows of exhausted men pass by. "Here is somebody who can use it," she called out all of a sudden, and threw the bottle into one of the open carts. A heavily bandaged soldier caught it, held his hand up for a moment as a kind of salute, and smiled. I will never forget that.

The end of the war, of course, did not end the suffering. What did those soldiers go back to? How far would they have to walk beyond Mainz? Perhaps through the whole length and breadth of Germany. How could the nation be held to account for the wasted lives, for the wasted years of the survivors?

I don't know whether the Kaiser was chased away before or after the soldiers came home, but I do remember that my mother took me to the cathedral square

when his abdication was announced. The people shouted with joy to be rid of their calamitous ruler, and even more deliriously when the hated crown prince's abdication was proclaimed immediately after. The Kaiser had by then fled ignominiously into exile in Holland, where he spent the rest of his life, so it was said, sawing wood.

The day after the last of the German troops had passed through, the victors arrived. What a splendid sight they were! We stood by the window and gazed at the Spahis, African troops who were part of the French army. They were well-nourished and handsome horsemen who manipulated their bright-red capes like matadors while riding around on beautiful black horses. I don't know what the grown-ups thought; for us it was a fantastic spectacle. We were even more impressed when some of the French soldiers actually appeared at our door. We didn't know, of course, that they came to commandeer our rooms. A man from the mayor's office explained, "I am sorry, Herr Lahnstein, but we have to requisition space in your apartment for the occupiers." There was nothing to be done—the French were to be lodged in the best residences all over town. They took all the rooms facing onto the street and left us to arrange ourselves in back as best we could. When they first moved in, they tried to be friendly—"Hey, kids, want some bread?"—and held out chunks of a snow-white bread we had never seen before, let alone tasted. "We do not eat the

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enemy's bread," my mother said, and snatched us away.

Soon after the arrival of the French my father and Uncle Carl came home, both embittered and resentful men who made themselves and the whole family miserable. Everybody fought all the time, my father had no job, and the situation became so untenable that it was clear we had to move out. But where to? It so happened that Uncle Albert and Aunt Flora had a second home in Königstein, in the Taunus woods, some twenty miles away. That house, too, had been requisitioned by the French—much to the chagrin of its owners. They forthwith claimed that they urgently needed it to shelter their homeless great-niece and her family. The French agreed to vacate one room, and so my mother moved us in while my father traveled all over Germany looking for a job. The French officers who occupied the house let us share the toilet and the washing facilities but not the kitchen, the inner sanctum of all true Frenchmen. We had to go out every day for our main meal. By and by the French let us have two more rooms plus the kitchen, and life became more comfortable, except that our mother, who did not know how to cook, still took us for the midday meal to a nearby restaurant. We were embarrassed, because everybody else's mother knew how to cook, but it was one of those things we could do nothing about—just as we could not dissuade our mother from keeping us home when the local French commander invited all the schoolchildren in town to a party. All the other children went, but my mother declared once again, "We do not eat the enemy's bread." On that occasion it was cake and ice cream, as the others told us gloatingly. Of course the French were all over the place; they took over the Catholic service, and when the priest said, "*Il n'y a qu'un Dieu, et c'est le bon Dieu français*" ("There is only one God, and He is the good French God"), my mother stormed out.

An Occupied Zone

MY father finally found a good job as a sales manager in Frankfurt, and my mother was "surprised by the stork" at the hospital. So now we had a brand-new baby brother—and a mother who had become extraordinarily relaxed. My sister and I agreed that this drastic change was a real miracle. When we had been hospitalized for scarlet fever, a year or so earlier, we had become so fond of the sisters and their loving care that we prayed for one of the nuns to become our mother—or, if that was not possible, for our mother to become a kindhearted nun. It seemed that our mother's visit to the hospital really had worked wonders. She said that she had not expected to have a third child, and she kept referring to the

baby as "my little mistake"; nevertheless, her maternal love, which had been suppressed for so long by her insecurity (and the compensatory need to present herself as a domineering authority), emerged from wherever she had kept it hidden and enveloped not only the baby but us older children as well. We were not used to verbal expressions of affection and basked happily in the good feeling.

My grandmother was at the time in a nursing home about

an hour away from Königstein. On our weekly visits to her bedside we had to walk through the woods on a trail on which ants had established a major crossroad for the colony. Thousands and thousands of them ran back and forth between a tall anthill on one side and whatever they were doing on the other. The moment one put a foot down into that busy swarm, dozens of ants started to crawl up one's shoes, socks, bare legs, and beyond. "I hate ants," I said. "I don't want to step across." "Come on," my mother said; she picked me up and set me down on the other side of the crawlers. I was so relieved, I fell on her neck. "Thank you, thank you." "That was easy, wasn't it?" she said. "I hope I can always carry you that easily over whatever difficulties will be in your future path." I shall always remember

that unique testimony of tenderness. My mother did not allow herself to be so affectionate again face-to-face until she was in her seventies.

We had been so used to living in a fatherless household that we did not know what to expect should our father assume the role of a breadwinning head of the family. But that was not going to happen in the immediate future. Königstein was in the occupied zone, and Frankfurt, where his job was, was not. Both the French and the Germans made it as difficult as possible to cross from one zone to the other. There was endless harassment at the checkpoints—permits issued yesterday were declared invalid today. Sometimes the border was closed altogether for an indeterminate period. In his new job my father could not risk being stuck in the occupied zone, so he had to live in Frankfurt in a rented room. Some Sundays we got together at a stretch of the border that ran along a ditch in the woods. He, arriving from Frankfurt, sat down on one side of the ditch; we, coming from Königstein, sat on the other. We passed food back and forth, careful to keep a distance between us when the mounted border patrol came along. They searched through our picnic baskets, inspected our papers, and advised us to "break it up"; the next troop, they warned, might not take as benevolent an attitude toward our illicit meeting.

This was one of the more harmless political adventures during the years when the fabric of the German postwar government was fraying all over.

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A WEEK AFTER THE MILLION- MARK NOTES HAD BEEN ISSUED, WE WERE USING THEM AS SCRIB- BLE PAPER IN SCHOOL.

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The Great Inflation

THE Peace of Versailles, which signified Germany's defeat, created an enormous amount of frustration and anger throughout the nation. A large number of rabble-rousers attempted to overthrow the Weimar government, the successor to the Kaiser's Reich. We children realized that Germany was in desperate straits when the unstable political conditions created rampant inflation. The mark continually lost value. In July of 1920 one dollar was worth forty marks. Two years later it was worth ten times as much. By July of 1923 the exchange rate had become 353,000 marks to the dollar, and from then on the depreciation ran wild. The mint could hardly keep up, printing bills of larger and larger denominations that were worthless the day after they were put into circulation. Million-mark bills were pieces of white paper printed on one side only. A week after they had been issued, we were using them as scribble paper in school—it was cheaper than buying note pads at the stationery store. My mother went to Frankfurt the morning of the day when my father's pay was due, so that she could run quickly to a store and convert it into goods: socks, flour, soap—whatever was available; a few hours later the pay would have lost three quarters of its morning value. During that overheated inflation German money stopped being a means of exchange: prices were quoted in dollars. A farmer who delivered a year's supply of potatoes for our root cellar demanded a fortune—one whole dollar for the wagonload. If we did not have foreign currency, vendors of goods and services asked for tangibles. A piano lesson might be worth a quarter pound of butter. But the farmers whose cows produced the butter did not want piano lessons—they wanted the pianos, even though they did not know how to play them. Steinway grand pianos were the biggest status symbols. Some country people were said to have not just one but two Steinways, back to back, in their poor cottages. Meanwhile, everything the middle class had owned went down the drain. Uncle Albert was in despair; he flailed helplessly against the monster that was devouring his retirement funds. "When the mark sinks to two billions against the dollar, it will be taps for Germany," he proclaimed. Events proved him right. When the mark finally stabilized, he had lost everything he owned and had to go back to work at age sixty-five. Nearly everybody we knew was traumatized as well as impoverished by the catastrophic inflation.

The inflation, in turn, engendered more bitterness and unrest, especially in the Rhineland, where the French, for their own political reasons, supported a rowdy group of "separatists"—so named because they agitated for a buffer zone between France and Germany, to be carved out from what was unquestionably German territory. Not unreasonably, the German majority opposed the idea, but having no guns to defend themselves, they were at a disadvantage. One morning we children were alone in the house with Kaethchen, the maid, my mother having gone to Frankfurt the previous day and

stayed overnight. The telephone rang; the father of one of our school friends informed Kaethchen that the separatists had occupied Königstein during the night. There would be no school that day, and she must keep us inside the house. Sure enough, almost immediately after Kaethchen hung up, the shooting started. The sounds of breaking glass and of objects being thrown down from roofs made us scurry for safety under the heavy dining table. There we felt quite safe; in fact, we shivered pleasurably to witness so exciting an event. I don't remember how long the separatists hung around—perhaps a couple of days. When it was over, we went to look at the damage. Among other things, the vandals had smashed the entire fine china service of the Grand Duchess of Luxembourg, which was stored in the city hall when she was not in residence in her Königstein summer house.

My Father

EVENTUALLY the border between the occupied and unoccupied zones was suspended, and my father came to live with us in Königstein. But his physical presence went almost unnoticed. He grumbled day in and day out about the hardship of his job or about the actually very moderate amount of money our mother spent. He taught us bicycle riding, but he never got on a bike to ride along. He never went swimming, let alone ice skating or motorcycling, like my uncles. He never read to us. The Lahnsteins looked down on him and compared him unfavorably with their other sons-in-law. He knew that my mother was not interested in him—she made no bones about it. "If I didn't have to drag him around with me, I would . . ." Not being wanted, he withdrew. He got up early in the morning, made himself a pot of tea, walked the mile and a half to the railway station, and went to his office in Frankfurt. After hours he repaired to a tavern, where he sat, always at the same table, in the grunting companionship of business associates till it was time to go home. He ate supper with us, sighed, and plopped down in an easy chair, where he sat silent and half asleep till bedtime. He and my mother fought incessantly about everything and nothing; after a particularly acrimonious fight he would disappear for weeks. Only under duress would he go with us to a play or a family festivity. What he wanted was to be left alone to work on his stamp collection or to write up inventories for his business. He was somebody to be pitied, not a father one would look up to.

He was full of superstitions. Two things that scared him beyond reason were thunderstorms and the white slave trade, though not concurrently. At the first sign of a thunderstorm he made us move away from windows and forbade us to touch anything made of metal. He himself sat cowering till the storm had passed.

Though I was told several years later that my father's fear of the white slave trade was justified, in Königstein in the 1920s we simply did not believe there was such a thing. He kept

telling us that an international conspiracy lured young girls into houses of joy. "You don't know what's going on out in the world," he said when we ridiculed his idea. "I hear true stories; I know." "You would know," my mother scoffed. "You are the one who frequents houses of joy; admit it." What was wrong with houses of joy? Why didn't he want us to be joyful too? We didn't know that "house of joy" was a euphemism for a brothel, but we didn't know what a brothel was either. He kept on, telling a "true" story: how a young girl attending a theater performance with a companion had been spirited away when the latter went to the restroom during intermission. People in the next row later recalled that a man had come up and invited the girl to join him for refreshments in the lobby. When her friend returned, the girl had vanished, and nobody ever saw her again. "She's probably in a brothel in Constantinople," my father concluded, "and that's where you will end up if you don't watch out."

Years later, when I was at the university, he fumed when I told him about vacation jobs I planned to apply for. "You are not going to Finland as a tutor—that's where the white slave trade has its headquarters." "You are not going to take a temporary job as secretary in Switzerland—with all those borders it is so easy to whisk an innocent girl into Italy or France or Austria." "You are not going to Iceland to help with the haying . . ." Probably he envisioned a white slave trader lurking among the geysers. My mother could have supported me in my plans by simply disregarding his objections to anything that was not totally conventional. But somehow she was afraid that she would be held responsible—by my father and everybody else—if I came to grief.

The Sisters

THE local school in Königstein went only to the eighth grade. Most of my classmates entered the working world right after graduation. At age fourteen or so childhood was over and adulthood began. The transition was immediate and sharp. Some of my friends were sent to boarding schools; others, like me, were enrolled as day students at the local convent school. My mother was apparently determined to keep me under her wing as long as possible, even at the cost of mediocre schooling. The sisters meant well, and they were in general far more interested in us girls than the teachers at our old school had been. I admired their singleness of heart, their unquestioning devotion, and

their efforts to teach us what they thought we ought to know.

The ninth grade was the uppermost grade in that school, and the parents of the boarding students expected their daughters to acquire in that year the polish that would serve them well in their future lives as wives of solid, prosperous husbands. An inordinate amount of time was spent on perfecting this image: sewing, and embroidering doilies to be put on top of yet more doilies for the overstuffed furniture they envis-

aged in their future homes. After Christmas vacation one of the students brought back a hanging, to be worked in needlepoint, that had a design of little cherubs floating around with garlands in their chubby hands. The piece vanished after class; when it reappeared, the sewing-class sister had redesigned it so that the little cherubs were now in robes. "You would not want to have unclad figures in your house," she told



An outing from the convent school

the startled girl. Physical education and health were taken seriously. One sister took us on long walks; when some girls complained, she told them that one day they would remember her with gratitude, because she had helped them to develop healthy bodies, "so that you don't become sickly women and a burden to your husbands." Two sisters even took us to a swimming pool and made us get into the ice-cold water. The pool was below a tall rocky hill. The local louts used to climb to the top and ogle the girls during ladies' hours. To forestall such impropriety, one sister ascended the hill and sat on top with a large club in her hand to keep voyeurs away, while the other sister watched over us from the side of the pool. Not that any Peeping Toms could have seen much—our bathing suits had sleeves to the elbows and knickers to the knees. The boarding students told us that in the convent they were not even allowed to look at their own bodies. For the Saturday-night bath the tub was covered with a large white cloth with a small opening at one end. The bather was to slip through that opening into the water and wash her limbs underneath the cover.

Once a week a dance teacher was imported from Frankfurt to teach us the latest steps. In preparation for the class the nuns scattered slivers of floor wax over the hardwood floor, so that when we danced, in our stocking feet, we polished the floor at the same time. One of the sisters sat at the piano and played the latest hits from the sheet music the dance teacher brought along: "Yes! we have no bananas" and "What do you do with your knee, my dear Hans, when we dance, when we dance, when we dance?" Of course, there were no boys—we took turns at leading, whether it was a waltz, a tango, or the Charleston.

At last the year in the convent school came to an end, and a decision had to be made about where my further education was to take place. I was not asked what I wanted. I was to go to the Schillerschule, a girls' school in Frankfurt; I was to board with Aunt Flora and Uncle Albert, and come home on weekends.

I anticipated that the new school would be just another educational institution, though on a higher intellectual level than the ones I had attended till then. My mother believed that she would keep on being the dominant influence in my development—after all, I would be so close to home; Frankfurt was only twenty miles away. Both of us were wrong: the new school was not only far more stimulating than I had imagined; it encouraged, even demanded, independence on the part of the students from the standards of bourgeois conventionality. Inevitably I began to break away from my mother's dominance and to question the values she and her circle espoused.

The Schiller School

HAVING passed the entrance examination for the tenth grade, I was told to report to the principal of the new school for orientation early in the morning on the first day of class. A tall man, his hands stretched out in greeting, strode toward me and boomed, "May God punish England." I was taken aback; my first inclination was to ask Why? My rehearsed greeting, "Good morning, Herr Direktor," did not seem to fit the occasion either. Fortunately he enlightened me: "You are to reply, 'May God punish England'—we all need to implore the good Lord to hear us." Thereupon he sat down and had me fill out forms.

Herr Direktor B., I heard later, was a displaced person; his home town, in one of the eastern provinces, had been ceded to Poland under the Treaty of Versailles—or, as we were told to say, the ignominy of Versailles, which ratified the Allies' victory after the First World War. Rather than stay on as a member of a suppressed minority under the despised "Polacks," whom he considered to be a lower species, he had gone west to Frankfurt. There he kept on yearning for the restitution of pre-war Germany and for revenge against England, which he singled out as the instigator of all his troubles. Neither the teachers nor the students shared the principal's chauvinism.

After that astonishing reception I was told to prepare at once for a two-week trip. My class, like all the other classes, would take such a trip every year. Guided by teachers, we would study a specific region of Germany—its art and architecture, its history, plant and animal life, geology, and so

on. Besides the educational aspect, these low-budget excursions served another agenda: it was believed that communal living and concentrated study, away from the distractions of friends and family, would lower the perception of differences among us girls from varied backgrounds.

At my new school history, philosophy, and literature were taught not as a rehash of textbook material but as disciplines that required analytical thinking. It was taken for granted that we had read enough of Goethe and Schiller and that we were ready for unconventional literature: the revolutionary Georg Büchner, Rainer Maria Rilke, Thomas Mann, Henrik Ibsen, Frank Wedekind, André Gide, George Bernard Shaw, and Upton Sinclair. We were encouraged to delve into philosophy; I spent a happy year reading Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. Those of us who were not particularly attuned to poetry were taught how to appreciate both the form and the substance of a poem: "Concentrate," the teacher would say, before reading us a modern poem—without mnemonic rhymes—two times in a row. After the second reading we were expected to recite, word for word, what we had listened to.

The teachers were uncommonly devoted to their profession; many gave freely of their time after school to teach a subject that was not in the official curriculum. To help us understand the intellectual climate of historical periods, one teacher whom I particularly remember made us listen to the music of those times. One series dealt with the structure of

Bach's art of the fugue; another analyzed Wagner's opera cycle *The Ring of the Nibelungs*. But despite our teachers' labors, and labors of love, the Schillerschule Real Gymnasium (its official name) did not rank first among Frankfurt educational institutions: that place was reserved for the Lessing Gymnasium for boys, which was steeped in the traditional ideals of antiquity. Latin and Greek were obligatory. Had there been coeducation, my mother would surely have sent me to the Lessing Gymnasium. She much preferred its lofty ideals to the progressive—or, as she often said, eccentric—principles of the Schillerschule. The abstractions of the classic Greek tragedies were "safe." Modern drama raised too many problems. My mother was not able to identify with, say, Ibsen's characters. The

things that agitated Hedda Gabler, or the heroines of Shaw's plays, had no relevance to her tradition-based life; very reluctantly she admitted that she did not understand the new literature, nor did she wish to understand it.

Unfortunately, science teaching in the Schillerschule was decidedly inferior. The teachers, most of them with Ph.D.s, had floundered on their way to becoming university professors, and resented having to teach science to girls.

A TALL MAN,
HIS HANDS
STRETCHED OUT
IN GREETING,
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"MAY GOD PUN-
ISH ENGLAND."

We had dancing lessons jointly with boys from a neighboring high school. The weekly events, which took place in the gym, were led by the gym teacher: "Now the gentlemen on this side of the hall step forward toward the ladies on the other side—slowly, no jostling, please, gentlemen!—each inviting his opposite to dance." I went because everybody else went, but I disliked the whole thing—the sweaty smell of adolescent boys, the monosyllables that they thought passed for conversation, and the boring long walk home in the enforced company of one's partner.

Taught by my mother that men were an—alas—inevitable evil, I misinterpreted their every word and gesture as either too forward or too stupid. Like many shy teenagers, I was convinced that I was the most unpopular person in the world; the easiest remedy was to withdraw, and withdraw I did. I went to parties anticipating that I would be a wallflower, and I probably was one more often than I want to remember.

It was rumored that the high school boys with whom we went to dances sometimes went to see low-class girls, but we were not really clear about what happened on those occasions. At age fourteen, according to the guide at Goethe's birthplace in the Grosser Hirschgraben, Goethe had seduced the barmaid Gretchen—an act that he expiated many years later in *Faust*. We wondered whether our male contemporaries, in the spirit of Goethe, also seduced innocent young girls—or what did they do?

How could we know? When a young woman returned from her honeymoon, her unmarried women friends were not allowed to associate with her for several weeks—lest she tell them all about marital bliss.

Our ignorance was prodigious.

WHEN YOU TELL ME

When you tell me I
should keep the house
and furniture, the air
inside the car is like
the breath a woman holds,
breaking eggs against
a bowl or listening
for the sound of shoes
in the bedroom, the closet
door closing where her
husband has just
stood, choosing a tie.

—LAURIE LAMON

"Marry a Rothschild"

MARRIAGE was the destiny of every girl. "When the time comes, I'll do my best to marry you off to a man of culture," my mother said, "not to a dolt like your father. I'll pick a husband for you who is like Mr. O."—the husband of a much-envied school friend of hers. "Every single night after dinner he reads Goethe to Anneliese and the children. She tells me he is now on Volume Seventeen." Since Goethe's collected works, including an abstruse discourse on the theory of color, filled sixty volumes or more, I thought he still had a long way to go. "And on their twenty-fifth anniversary," my mother continued, "he is going to take Anneliese on a trip to Weimar, where Goethe spent most of his life. Imagine—they'll walk in Goethe's footsteps. But you should not have to wait that long to visit Weimar; you ought to go there for your honeymoon. I tell you what: I shall leave you and your husband alone for the first few days, and then I'll join you. I have always wanted to visit Weimar. Promise!" She took it for granted that her future son-in-law, whoever he might be, would be a man of culture, and would therefore want nothing better than to go for his—our—honeymoon to Weimar, that staid and unromantic small town.

Sometimes my mother's plans for my future extended beyond Frankfurt. "After your Abitur"—the high school graduation—"I am going to send you to Paris, to be a trainee at the Rothschilds' bank. Then you can marry a Rothschild and . . ."

"How would I ever meet one?" I asked. "Do you really think that they socialize with trainees?"

"Of course, you can't attract a Rothschild—or, for that matter, anybody—if you keep on being such a slob," my mother said angrily, sensing that perhaps her plan wasn't all that realistic. "Your stocking seams are always crooked; you have not the slightest flair for putting your hat on at the right angle. Look at Cousin Anna—how chic she is! That's how you ought to look if you want to marry into the Rothschild family."

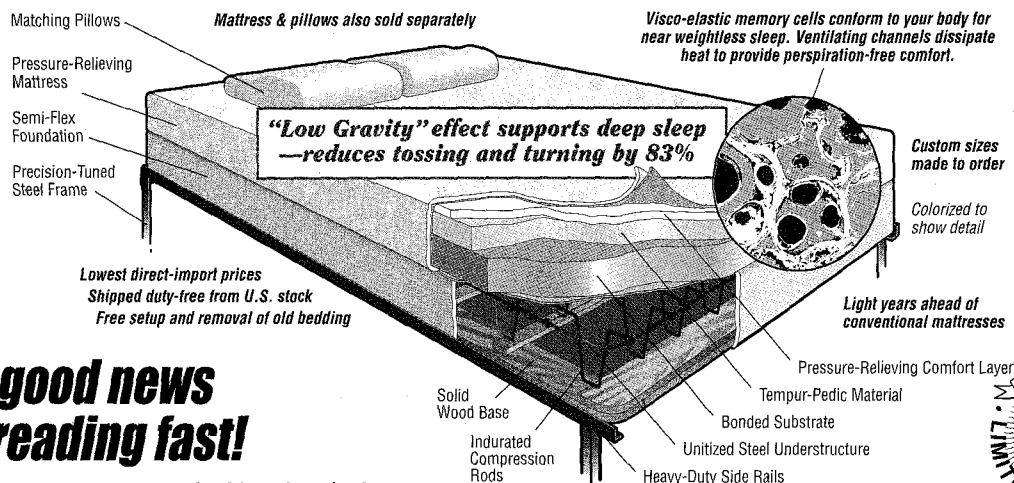
"I don't want to go to Paris," I said. "It's too far away." I did not want to add that working as a file clerk in a bank—or whatever trainees do—was not the future I envisaged for myself. Most of all I resented that I was not asked what I, Doris Schmitz, thought of the transaction. I would not let myself be sent away like a parcel with the destination printed on the outside.

"You stupid ass," my mother retorted. "You are not being asked, you are being told to do what I decide is in your best interests. And don't forget, once you are married to a Rothschild, you can become a famous woman like Bertha von Suttner [the renowned pacifist of the pre-war years], or Sonya Kovalevski [a Russian mathematician whose biography my mother had just read], or Madame Curie. Yes, take Madame Curie for a model. Invent radium! Like her. You'll be famous!"

"But radium has already been discovered," I interjected.

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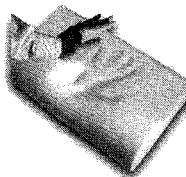
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"Don't argue," my mother said, getting agitated. "You are going to invent radium or I'll pull your hair, you blockhead."

When I graduated from the Schillerschule, I wanted to study mathematics and physics. Ultimately I did, but twenty years later and in the United States. My mother, backed by the entire family, said, "Absolutely not! You'll never find a husband, and how will you make a living?" As a compromise she would allow me to go to the university (no member of her or my father's family had ever gone to one), provided that I study law.

I had no interest in the law, and still have none. Yet being a law student freed me from stifling German middle-class "respectability" and, above all, from the dominance of my mother.

European students of those days, before Hitler, could enroll, one semester at a time, at any university in Europe and travel. And that's what I did. First I spent the better part of a year in London—ostensibly to study law and economics at the London School of Economics. Actually I lived and worked in a settlement house on the south side of the Thames. It was located in one of London's most horrible slums, where people lived in dank, rat-infested back-to-back houses. We well-educated, well-to-do university women were supposed to "uplift the proletariat." My job was to persuade slum mothers to have their children vaccinated. I doubt that I did much good; but then, that was not the point of the exercise anyhow. The true purpose of the early settlement houses was to expose the offspring of the bourgeoisie to "real life," and in that they were successful. I had been carefully shielded from the poverty in which the great majority of people were still living. And so I certainly learned more in the settlement house than I could have learned leading the typical life of a student at the London School of Economics.

Next I spent more than half a year in Paris—and again, little of the time at the university. I fell in love with a young, struggling painter and spent almost all my time with him and with a group of other equally young, equally struggling artists. But in the end I decided that I was not cut out to become the wife of a starving painter (even of a genius), and so I left Paris and went back to Germany.

I spent the next semester in Kiel, the university town near Germany's Danish border. And only then, to complete the requirements for my doctoral thesis, did I return to Frankfurt

and life at home. I wanted to get the law over with as fast as possible. Given my lengthy sojourns abroad, a thesis in international law was the obvious choice. As I remember, it had something to do with the law of the sea.

A professor who specialized in international law allowed me to attend his weekly seminar, which was traditionally limited to more-advanced students. He conducted it at his house after dinner. Or, rather, he did not conduct; he just sat by and watched while two extremely eloquent young men took over the proceedings—Fritz Kraemer, a German, and Peter Drucker, an Austrian. Kraemer affected the style and manners of an aristocrat of the Kaiser years. Disregarding the red, black, and gold flag of the Weimar Republic, he insisted on the colors of the Hohenzollern time. Students would stand on the bridge across the Main to watch—and jeer at—him when he sailed past in his little foldboat, wearing nothing but bathing trunks and a monocle, and flying the black, white, and red flag of the Kaiser's empire. In class the legal aspects of this incongruity were debated with great ponderation: did the law of the sea apply to foldboats? Spirited arguments invariably extended beyond the end of an evening; when we walked homeward, Drucker and Kraemer would keep on talking to each other as if I, between the two of them, were a nonperson. Much later they told me they were in awe of me because I never opened my mouth; they thought I disdained to participate in a conversation that I considered below my level of competence. Ah, well . . .

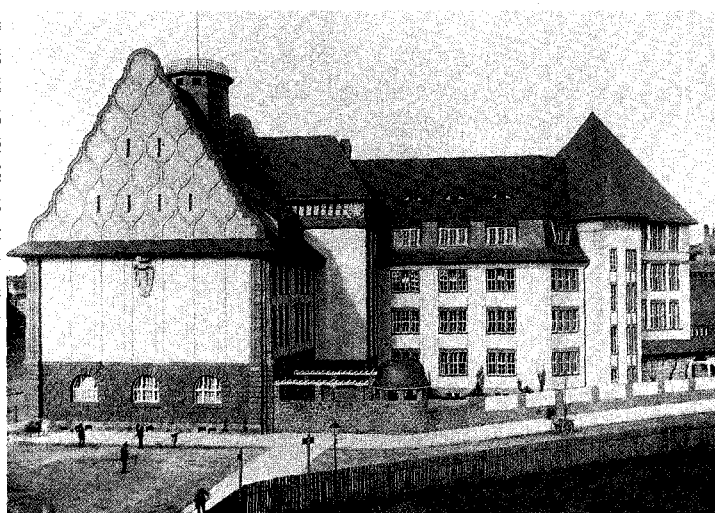
I had also enrolled in a morning class on constitutional

law that was taught by the same professor, a seasoned hypochondriac. Feeling unwell one day, he delegated Peter Drucker to take over. The latter was unprepared, of course. So, instead of a classroom lecture, he announced, we would go to the historical museum and study the symbols of our constitutional history: the crowns, scepters and orbs, and parchments declaring peace

(documents declaring war are not usually publicly exhibited). We would see all the celebrated trappings that were said to have led us from the dark into the modern, enlightened days.

Unlike the standard historical depositories, Frankfurt's was housed in a magnificent complex called the Römer. From 1562 its grand hall had been where the Prince Electors dined with the newly crowned Holy Roman Emperor. The ruler would go out onto a balcony to show himself to his people,

INSTITUT FÜR STADTGESCHICHTE FRANKFURT A.M.



Frankfurt's progressive Schillerschule for girls

who would be assembled in the square below. Römer Square, with its large fountain, was probably the most perfectly proportioned square in all of Germany. It was surrounded by richly decorated patrician houses whose old names were displayed on iron signs that hung at their entrances: House of the Big Angel, House of the Golden Griffin, House of the Wild Man . . . I liked that part of the city better than any other.

Having already seen the museum exhibits several times, I was standing by a window looking out at the picturesque scene when I heard Peter Drucker call it quits for the day. We started to descend the broad stone stairs, which had been worn by the footsteps of countless temporal and spiritual dignitaries. Drucker sidled toward me, and by the time we had walked down all the way, he had asked where I was going to have lunch. "At home, of course." "Oh." He seemed to hesitate. "I thought we could have lunch together." "We can," I said, "but I have to telephone home not to expect me." That done, he suggested a vegetarian restaurant nearby. The food was terrible, but the conversation was interesting. Drucker told me that he was the foreign editor of a large Frankfurt daily newspaper, the *General Anzeiger*, and that he was working toward his J.D. on the side.

All the high-minded people, and the bona fide members of the Frankfurt intelligentsia, subscribed to or at least read the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, which was synonymous with political wisdom and Kultur; but they also subscribed to the middle-brow, and more lively, *General Anzeiger*—"for the servants, you know." Of course the master and the mistress read every copy before they sent it out to the kitchen.

Asked at dinner where and with whom I had had lunch, I said that my companion worked at the *General Anzeiger* while completing his law studies. "What does he do at the paper?" my mother asked. "Is he a copy boy, or what?" "No, he is the foreign editor." "That's what he told you to impress you," my mother said. "Do you really believe the *General Anzeiger* would hire a snot-nosed twenty-three-year-old as its foreign editor?" "He really is," I replied, and showed her the day's paper. "See, here are his initials: P.F.D." My mother became enraged. "Do you mean to say that I have been taken in by a greenhorn, that I have for years swallowed the so-called opinions of a boy who is not yet dry behind his ears? That is outright deception on the part of the paper." She went to the telephone and canceled her subscription to the *General Anzeiger* forthwith.

After that initial lunch Peter Drucker and I went out on a few casual dates, but our interest in each other didn't develop into a serious, or even an unserious, attachment. My mother was relieved; she certainly did not want me to get involved

with an Austrian—a proverbially frivolous and irresponsible kind of person, given to playing schmalzty tunes on the violin. "You mix them up with Gypsies," I said. "I like Austrians." "I'll never permit you to marry an Austrian," my mother said. "They have no sense for the seriousness of life." Still, Drucker had a job that gave him an entrée to important people to whom he might conceivably introduce me. In that case I would have to be better dressed. My mother took me to the most fashionable store in Frankfurt and bought me a very elegant outfit.

I did not often have a chance to wear it: in the depressing political and economic atmosphere of Germany there were few occasions for social entertainment. The Communists, under orders from Stalin, attacked the Social Democrats from the left; the Nazis, rumored to be financed also by the Soviets, attacked from the right. The middle class that used to be the mainstay of the center parties had been decimated by the disastrous inflation of the early 1920s. Ten years later it did not have the strength to resist the pressure from either side. A series of political scandals fueled the general discontent. There was large-scale unemployment, and nobody had any idea how to brake the rapid descent into chaos. Average citizens nodded

their heads and acquiesced in the bourgeois slumber that the German poets had deplored a hundred years earlier. Prominent people who had previously adopted a lofty attitude toward politics now identified with the Communists or the Nazis, saying, in essence, "Let's see what the extremists can do." A great many people believed that the Nazis, if they prevailed, would not really carry out the program Hitler had outlined in *Mein Kampf*. Surely President Hindenburg would not allow it. The Nazis would just form a government like all others. Elli, a childhood friend from Königstein who was engaged to an SS man, assured me that nothing was going to happen; it was all election rhetoric.

This is all moot now. The Holocaust stays in our collective memory.

Nobody anticipated a Hitler coup as late as 1931. We students worried about the looming bar exam, about jobs and popularity with the opposite sex—the usual. A good many of our contemporaries participated in the ubiquitous political rallies at which protesters and hecklers were badly beaten up. But for most of us life went on as before.

My mother sent me to Nürnberg on a mission to her sister Margret. I really cannot remember what it was about. The only memorable thing about the trip was that I returned by plane. The government, anxious to popularize planes, offered students a very low fare—so why shouldn't I be enterprising? It was quite an adventurous undertaking, consider-

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PEELING
UNWELL, THE
PROFESSOR
DELEGATED
PETER DRUCK-
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OVER. THE
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ing that civilian air travel was still in its infancy. The little biplane flew at a low altitude, where it was tossed around by the updrafts from the Spessart Mountains. On my return I was hailed as a daredevil—I was the first in our family and our circle of acquaintances to have flown in a plane.

In the summer of 1932 I left Frankfurt for Holland to finish my doctoral thesis at the Permanent Court of International Justice at The Hague. By that time Peter Drucker was out of my life. We had drifted so far apart that I did not even say good-bye to him.

By the time my thesis was finished, Hitler had come to power in Germany. There was no point in my going back for a useless law degree. And so, taking advantage of a long weekend, I went to London to look for a job.

Finding Peter

IT did not take me long to get an offer: Norman Bentwich, a distinguished professor of international law, was looking for a research assistant. I accepted on the spot, and within a week or two I had moved to London. The Bentwiches were exceedingly kind people who treated me like a member of their family.

One day, riding down the very long escalator into the Piccadilly Circus Underground station, I was hailed by somebody riding up on the complementary escalator on the other side of the wide hall. It was Peter Drucker.

We waved at each other, and as soon as he reached the top, he turned around to ride down to meet me, while I turned around at the bottom to ride up to meet him. After we had played that game one more time, one of us—I forget who—used his or her head and waited for the other. We went to a restaurant and talked. Peter had given up his job at the *General Anzeiger*, and with it the prospects for a promising future in Germany. Now he was in London, working for an insurance company. Both of us were lucky to have found jobs in a time of high unemployment.

Drawn together by our shared experiences of the past and apprehensions about the future, Peter and I soon resumed our companionable relationship from the Frankfurt days. Word must have gotten to Vienna that

Peter was dating a German girl. Horrors—a German girl as a future daughter-in-law was as unacceptable to Mrs. Drucker as the prospect of an Austrian son-in-law was to Mrs. Schmitz. It was like suggesting a union between a Yankee and a member of an old southern family. Worse: the German girl had no money. Just as my mother was determined that I marry a Rothschild, so Peter's mother was determined that he marry the daughter of an immensely wealthy British no-

bleman. So Mrs. Drucker immediately dispatched a Viennese girl, a childhood friend of Peter's, to London with orders to get him away from that German girl.

Peter felt he had to show Maria around, and this did not sit well with me. I quid-pro-quoed, and by the time Maria went back home, our romance had waned. It waxed and waned over the next couple of months; neither of us thought that it would continue for long.

A few months after my arrival in London the Bentwiches went to the United States on a lecture tour and asked me to house-sit for them during their absence. Their house stood in the Vale of Health, a dell in the middle of the vast, grassy Hampstead Heath. A few nearby houses had been built by and for artists some fifty or sixty years before. In that rural enclave the residents enjoyed the advantages of country life right at the edge of urban London. But it was an isolated spot, and quite a distance from the nearest transportation facilities.

Around that time my mother arrived in London with my brother, whom she intended to enroll in a British boarding school. She took a room in a boardinghouse that was more conveniently located than the Bentwiches' house, which was at the bottom of a steep hill and accessible only by a zigzagging footpath through the grass. She worried about leaving my brother in England when she went back to Germany. I tried my best to calm her by agreeing with her on everything. One day she announced that we must invite Otto Stamm and

his wife, very distant relatives, for dinner that night. "Perhaps we ought to ask an additional guest," she suggested. "Somebody who speaks German and is good at making conversation." "The only person I can think of is Peter Drucker," I said. I was not at all sure that he would want to join us—our romance was in one of its waning stages. "What?" my mother cried in dismay. "You are still seeing that Austrian?" "Yes, and I am going to ask him right now." Peter was free and said he would be glad to come.

It had not occurred to either my mother or me that before one issues a dinner invitation, one should make sure there is food in the house. At home it was the servants' responsibility to see to that. Assuming that the Bentwich pantry had all the required provender, my mother went to her

boardinghouse to rest, and I went down to the kitchen. I did not know anything about cooking, mind you. I found some potatoes and a piece of cheese; I cut them up, layered them in a dish, and put them into the oven. Never having used the oven—any oven—before (the Bentwiches, too, had servants), I hoped that everything would turn out all right. Within five minutes there was a shattering noise—the dish, which was not heatproof, had cracked, and our presumptive dinner

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had turned into a glutinous mass that stuck to the bottom and the walls of the oven.

At that moment Peter arrived. "Help me, help me," I cried. "My mother and our guests are due in ten minutes. What am I going to do?" Alas, it was Sunday night; every store in all of England was closed. Every restaurant was closed as well. We had to improvise. In the pantry we found another potato and a can of sardines that I had overlooked. We arranged it all equally on five plates, and that was our so-called dinner. I mumbled excuses, my mother glowered, the Stamms were terribly embarrassed; only Peter kept his good humor.

The Stamms left as soon as they could. My mother also decided to depart, postponing her reprimands for my unspeakable negligence until the next day, when we would be alone. By that time I was a wreck and unable to respond. Peter offered to escort my mother up the dark path toward her boardinghouse. While she put on her coat, he whispered to me that he would return; he could not bear to think of me staying all night by myself in that lonely house, devastated as I was.

He did come back. He put his arms around me and tried to cheer me while I sobbed and sobbed. Suddenly we heard a loud noise outside, as if a stone were rolling down the hillside. This was followed by loud banging at the door. It was my mother. "Open up," she cried. "I know he's with you." "Wait, I have to find the key," I shouted back, while motioning to Peter that he'd have to hide. It would be a catastrophe if she found him there. But where could he go? She would search every room, look under every bed. "The coal cellar," I whispered. "It's the only place she's not likely to go. I'll lock you in and hide the key." So poor Peter, my gallant swain, spent the better part of the night crouching in a cold dark hole while my mother, as I had anticipated, turned the house upside down trying to find him. It probably sounds like a hilarious scenario—like a bedroom farce by Feydeau. For me, it was anything but funny.

"I followed him all the way back; I saw him go in," my mother insisted. "From the top of the hill I saw the square of light when you opened the door for him. I knew he'd go back to see you. He's up to no good. And because of you I fell down. I could not stop myself; I rolled down all the way from the top of the hill. My good suit is ruined. You are going to pay for it. Where is he?" This went on and on until after midnight, when she declared that she would not allow me to stay

in the Bentwiches' house that night. Instead I was to be with her at her boardinghouse. I was so beaten down that I could no longer protest. Under the pretext that I had to lock up downstairs, I opened the door to the coal cellar and let Peter out through the back door.

My mother's room had only one bed; I slept on the floor. Or, rather, I did not sleep—her castigations continued throughout the night. She was going to disown me. My reply that I did not care, because I was self-supporting, only provoked a new set of lamentations: what a misfortune that one's children nowadays earned enough to disregard their parents' threats of disinheritance. Finally she gave me the ultimate condition for her letting up: I must swear, cross my heart, never ever to see Drucker again. If that's what it took to end the harangue, I would swear. It would be a mere formality; oaths extorted under pressure are void.

Next morning, on my way to work, I telephoned Peter and asked him please, please, to meet me during the lunch hour. I was desperately afraid that the night in the coal cellar had turned him away from me forever. It hadn't. He came to meet me at the Red Lion, near the British Museum. He looked remarkably cheerful and dapper, considering

his recent tribulation. For my part, I had not yet got off the emotional roller coaster of the past sixteen hours. When he came in the door, I was so relieved to see him that I broke down and cried. One of the waitresses, a motherly woman, came to the table. "Sir," she said sternly to Peter, "look what you have done to this nice young lady. Can't you see how unhappy she is?" And then, turning to me, "Now, don't cry, dearie. I know a good abortionist in Rotherham. You just take the tube—you have to change at Charing Cross—and then . . ." Her well-meant advice struck me as so funny that I had to laugh. "Thank you, thank you, but the last thing I need is an abortionist," I told the good woman. She was nonplussed: then what was I crying about?

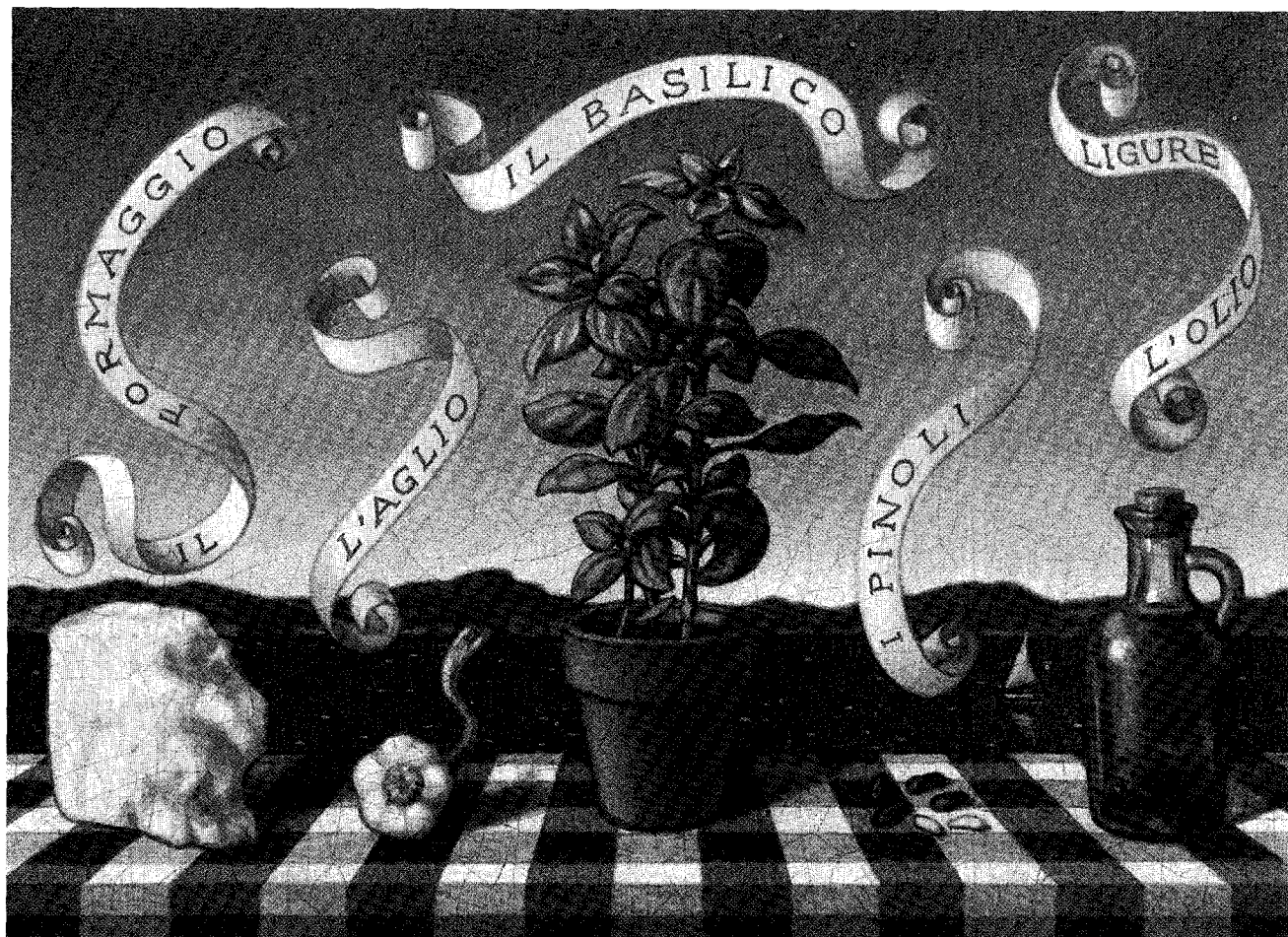
Yes, what was I crying about? Peter and I were together again, and that's what really mattered.

When my mother left for Germany, a week later, I saw her off at Victoria Station. As I waited for the train to pull out, she leaned from the window of her compartment and reminded me of my promise never again to see Peter Drucker, that happy-go-lucky Austrian. As the train started to move, the object of her scorn stepped from behind a pillar, where he had been hiding, and we fell into each other's arms. ☼



*The author at the time
of her marriage*

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Pesto by Hand

*The oldest—and still the best—way to make
most people's favorite pasta sauce
need not be laborious*

I ALMOST rammed a fellow shopper's cart in the gourmet-foods aisle of the Up-Island Cronig's, on Martha's Vineyard, one August Sunday evening about ten years ago. We both needed pine nuts for pesto.

Only one tiny jar remained, and I spotted

it first. As I was putting the jar into my cart, I recognized my rival as a rising academic star from my college days, who today is one of the country's most widely quoted cultural figures. We chatted cordially, discussing mutual acquaintances

by Corby Kummer

and the beauty of the basil at the island's farmers' markets, which had inspired each of us to promise our respective hosts a pasta-and-pesto supper. Garlic, cheese, and of course basil were

readily at hand, but we both thought those pine nuts were the key to authenticity. To my everlasting shame, I did not transfer the jar from my cart to his on the way to the check-out counter. Nor did I pause to reflect on the irony that two sons of exurban America were nearly coming to civilized blows over a

small quantity of nuts—which were imported from China and probably stale anyway—to create an Italian sauce neither of us had tasted growing up. I had no idea that I could have used walnuts instead or simply omitted the nuts, and made two households happy.

I learned about the essential nature of what Marcella Hazan calls “the most seductive of all sauces for pasta,” and the ever-fugitive nature of authenticity, during a recent trip to Liguria—the Italian Riviera, dominated by Genoa, which has made pesto its emblem. Pesto's all-in-one convenience helps to explain its popularity: the herbs and seasoning and cheese necessary are concentrated in the fresh, uncooked sauce, whose flavor blooms with the heat of the pasta.

Intensely flavored condiments that could be preserved under oil were prized in a region whose men went to sea for months or years at a time. Basil grew on the hillsides that meet the sea—a landscape more dramatic and forbidding than in the adjacent French Riviera. The

landscape, I was told, helps to explain the character of Ligurians, who are hard and hardy, notoriously frugal, and slow to warm but loyal for life. (I traveled with Oldways, a magnet for cooks and writers, which organized the trip with the help of Fred Plotkin, whose definitive *Recipes From Paradise* contains delightful historical and cultural observations on Liguria.) The pounded-walnut sauces of the regions around the Black Sea, where Genoa maintained trading outposts, are thought to have been an inspiration for pesto; pine nuts were commoner than walnuts along the Mediterranean, so that's what Ligurians used. Garlic has always figured prominently in Ligurian cooking—far more prominently than in that of the southern region of Puglia, for example, even though people assume that garlic reigns only south of Rome. As Franco Solari, one of Liguria's most respected and tradition-minded restaurateurs, told me heatedly when lamenting lily-livered cooks who would denature his region's proudest achievement, "Pesto without garlic is not pesto."

In examining myths around the creation of pesto I was gratified that one—the only true pesto is made with basil grown in Genoa and its hinterlands—shattered upon inspection and close tasting. I was surprised and troubled, however, that the myth I most wanted to demolish remained tauntingly intact: pesto made by pounding and mixing the ingredients by hand with a pestle in a mortar is the best. The name of the sauce, after all, comes from the word for "pestle." I did find a shortcut, though, and ways to improvise a mortar and pestle. I reminded myself of what Patience Gray calls, in *Honey From a Weed*, a "tremendous antidote to depression": pounding "fragrant things" like garlic and basil.

AFTER reading about the special small-leaved basil of Genoa, I expected to find something completely different from what is available in American gardens and supermarkets. Instead I saw the familiar sweet basil (*Ocimum basilicum*), but pale, floppy, short, and young. So protective of their signature sauce have Ligurians become that purists use hothouse basil all year round, insisting that only shade and youth will pre-

vent a minty flavor, which they avoid with a vehemence verging on the fanatical. "Plant my basil in the ground five miles away," one greenhouse owner said, "and it will taste of mint." (I considered with sympathy my fellow travelers, who couldn't wait to get home and plant the basil seeds they had bought.) A recent history of Ligurian cuisine suggests that pesto caught on, in fact, only after the building of greenhouses became widespread, in the nineteenth century. This mint phobia is a bit—if I may say it—nutty, and certainly protectionist. American basil can have flavor just as fine, if not quite as fashionably wan, as that of Genoese hothouse basil. If the basil is in your garden, pick it when the biggest leaves are a little less than, say, an inch and a half long. If you're buying it, use the smallest leaves on each stalk, and set aside the larger ones for another use.

The Chinese pine nuts that Americans use—because they are what we find—are denigrated in Italy. (The Italian word for these kernels of hard pine cones is usually spelled without a *g*—*pinoli*. The insertion of *g* by Americans leads to amused puzzlement in Italians, for whom a *pignolo* is a gratingly fastidious fussbudget.) I familiarized myself on the trip with the bland, somewhat oily flavor of prized Italian nuts, and so did Joe Simone, a marvelously inquisitive and enthusiastic chef who cooks at Tosca, a restaurant in Hingham, on Boston's South Shore. When I went to the Tosca kitchen to try making various pestos, Simone and I compared pine nuts—very expensive Israeli ones, Chinese ones he bought from his supplier, and the nearly identical Chinese ones I found at a local market. The Chinese nuts had the better flavor, and were closer to the *pino-li* we remembered.

Ligurians sometimes use walnuts in pesto—walnuts fresh off the tree, moist with both water and oil, and very mild; dried walnuts, the kind in stores, give a much sharper taste. In this country almonds and even peanuts in pesto have their fans. If you can't find fresh pine nuts and want to hew close to an Italian line, don't ram another shopper's cart: use walnuts in half or two thirds the amount of pine nuts called for.

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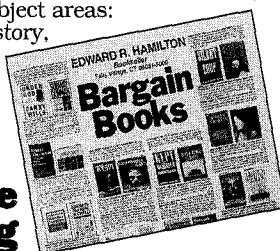
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ily you won't need one, because it is widely available here. It is essential for depth of flavor. Ligurians generally use half parmigiano and half pecorino sardo, sheep's-milk cheese whose sweetness rounds out the sauce; Sardinian pecorino, made by artisans or a large but good cheesemaker, such as the family-run Ferruccio Podda, is increasingly sold in American shops. Look at the label closely. Not every pecorino is sweet—especially pecorino romano, which can be extremely salty. Alternatively, a young Spanish manchego will provide the necessary balance, and so will the splendid Vermont sheep's-milk cheese made by Cindy and David Major (802-387-4473)—one of my favorite American cheeses along with Ig Vella's Monterey dry jack, which would also go well in pesto.

The idea is to round out and mellow the sauce, whose bite should come from garlic. Ligurian oil, one of Italy's most delicate kinds, also helps to accomplish this. Early recipes for pesto call for both Ligurian oil and (prepare to be shocked) butter. I didn't try this, but cooks I know in both Italy and America still add butter, to make the texture creamy and the flavor round. In any case, pesto is certainly not the place for strong, peppery Tuscan oil, which will massacre the fragrance of the basil. If you don't want to splurge on Ligurian oil (Rosenthal Wine Merchant, 518-398-1800, sells the beautiful Aldo Armato Ligurian oil for \$15 a half liter), or oil from Provence (sweet and comparably expensive), use a reliable and neutral workhorse like Colavita extra virgin.

To taste for yourself how gentle Ligurian pesto is, you can order a bottle—packaged, like all pesto meant to be stored, without cheese—of the Roi brand, from Badalucco, a town with so many olive presses that I encountered several while peering into back alleys. (Zingerman's, in Ann Arbor, at 888-636-8162, imports Roi pesto, and sells most of the cheeses I've mentioned.) At \$9.00 for a six-ounce bottle, it's not something you're likely to order very often. But you will see how unassertive Genoese hot-house basil is, and also how little garlic Ligurians use to create a balanced pesto. Chances are you'll decide that you can do better on your own, and chances are you'll be right.

GIVEN that "there are as many recipes as cooks," as Anna Del Conte writes of pesto in her masterly *Gastronomy of Italy*, here is my attempt at a harmonious sauce that stars garlic and basil.

Yes, you can use a blender, but try not to. After Simone and I arrived at a ratio of ingredients, which required a preliminary round of pestos, we made seven batches of pesto following different techniques. The sweetest and subtlest flavor came from the batch made entirely with mortar and pestle. The consistency was the creamiest, the color the most jewel-like, and the sauce by far the longest-lasting. All the other batches began to separate right away. The worst of all was the batch made start to finish in the food processor, which within minutes was an island of greenish paste floating on an oil slick.

Not owning a mortar, unfortunately, is no excuse. Any sturdy, narrow bowl will do. At Tosca I used the metal bowl of an electric mixer, and its convenient handle allowed me to angle the bowl as I worked. Simone lent me a wooden pestle he had bought for \$2.00 in Genoa, and its convex bottom, as wide as a trumpet mute, was a revelation. I had remembered pounding as endless labor because of my mingy teardrop pestle—better suited to crushing a few peppercorns or a pill, as its pharmaceutical origins imply. A broad surface makes for quick, relatively painless pounding. (The blunt end of a wooden rolling pin—the kind without handles—will serve the same purpose, so long as you don't mind smelling garlic the next time you roll out pie crust.) Using the right pestle and just one short-cut, I reduced the total pounding time to about six minutes a batch.

The idea is to "melt" the leaves into the sauce, continually pressing them against the floor and walls of the bowl and against one another. A rough inner surface will help. Italian books counsel against any up-and-down motion, advocating a steady rotary movement, and the more dictatorial of them add that you should work in one direction only (as with cake batter "in my pre-mixer childhood," Barbara Kafka writes in her *Soup, A Way of Life*, to be published in November). When I watched Melly Solari—a woman legendary for her pesto, who with her husband, Franco, runs the restaurant Ca' Peo, in the Ligurian hill town

of Leivi—make three consecutive batches of pesto by hand, she never lifted the pestle from the floor or sides of the mortar (well, hardly ever). Instead she kept it moving in a steady circular motion that was somewhere between firm pressing and light pounding. I was able to emulate her heavy pushing for the garlic-and-salt paste that is the first step, and then for the nuts, which quickly softened into a coarse mass. But I had to abandon nonviolent means when it came time to add the basil.

This is the time-consuming part, and where shortcuts come in. Solari added a few whole leaves at a time, and their tenderness and small size, not to mention her experience, made the work go fast. Big tough basil takes far more time, so I recommend first reducing the leaves to pieces as small as possible. The ideal way is to shred them by hand: metal seems to drain fragile leaves of their juices before they can release their aroma.

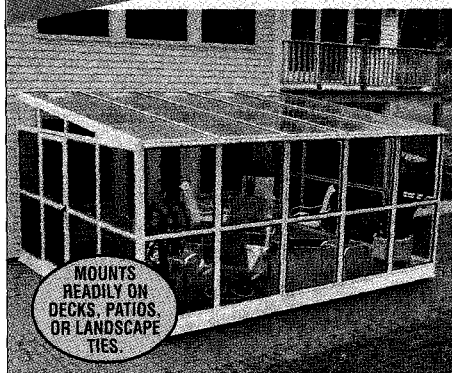
To make a cup of pesto, enough to serve six to eight people, smash and peel one large or two small cloves of garlic, removing any center shoots, which can make the sauce bitter. Pluck enough basil leaves less than an inch and a half long to make two packed cups, removing the central rib if it is big enough to feel with your fingertip; rinse well and dry between paper towels. Depending on your patience, either tear the leaves into fine strips or shred them in a food processor. Pound the garlic with a big pinch of coarse salt until it forms a smooth paste. Add three tablespoons of pine nuts, one tablespoon at a time, and pound until the pieces are very small and the mass sticks to the bottom of the pestle. This will take only two or three minutes. Start adding the shredded leaves about two tablespoons at a time, lifting the pestle as little as possible; keep it moving around the mortar, pushing and pressing, until you can hardly make out any individual pieces of basil.

Now add the grated cheeses, which will help to homogenize the paste. (Here you can switch to a spoon.) The total amount, I think, should be five tablespoons; the proportion will depend on the cheeses. If you have found a sweet sheep's-milk cheese, try three tablespoons of parmigiano-reggiano and two of pecorino; if the second cheese is very salty, change the amounts to four and

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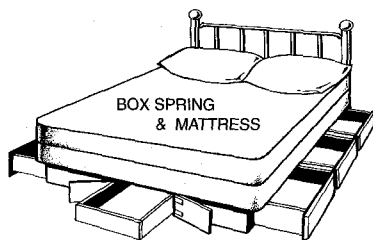
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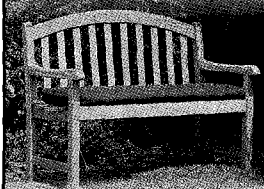


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one. Taste as you go. Too much cheese is the ruination of most of the recipes I encountered, and even Melly Solari spoiled one of her hand-pounded batches by overdoing the parmigiano. Finally, stir in three tablespoons of oil.

The finished sauce, a thick, rich paste, is best stored at room temperature. Made without cheese (which is added before serving), pesto can be stored in sterilized jars, covered with a generous film of oil to slow oxidation and the inevitable discoloration. Made with cheese, the sauce will last two or three days at room temperature and four to seven days in the refrigerator. Of course, you can freeze pesto, with or without cheese (better without), but I agree with Fred Plotkin that you do so at your own risk—the perfume of the basil never fully returns, and the balance of flavors shifts, with garlic becoming more pronounced as the basil's fragrance fades. Fresh basil is available year-round, after all, and you can make pesto whenever you want.

It would be a romantic fiction to claim that most Ligurian cooks make pesto by hand. "Useless to hide behind rhetoric and hypocrisy," Paolo Lingua writes in the 1989 *Cucina dei Genovesi*. "People use the blender." Not the processor, which never gets the consistency right and is disastrous with the nuts, although it is acceptable for shredding basil leaves. In the coastal town of Recco, which Plotkin considers to be arguably the epicenter of Ligurian cuisine, the cooks at Manuelina restaurant laughed when I asked to see the mortar in which they had prepared the pesto for our lunch. In one of those enviable Italian gestures they rolled their hands to indicate eternal and ridiculous effort and looked toward the blender. To make blender pesto, place all the ingredients except the cheese in the jar and pulse the machine, frequently stirring down the mixture—and you'll have to stop the machine often, to cram down all the leaves—until a paste forms. Stir in the cheese by hand, tasting the sauce as you add it.

PESTO is at its best gently but thoroughly heated, as by hot pasta or hot sliced boiled potatoes: the most typical Ligurian pesto-pasta dish uses flat trenette noodles, similar to linguine or fettucine, cooked with string beans and chunks of potatoes. Every Ligurian cook I observed diluted pesto with starchy

cooking water, usually in a ratio of three parts pesto to one part water. This was not just Genoese parsimony at work. Pesto is concentrated, for easy storage, and meant to be diluted. The cooking water helps to bind the sauce to the pasta and helps the cheese to melt and evenly coat the strands. Pesto is often extended, and mellowed, with a sourish fresh white cheese. Called *prescinsêua* in Liguria, its closest equivalents are fromage blanc, quark, and plain yogurt left in a sieve to drain overnight; a tablespoon or two of yogurt can compensate for the harshness of overgrown basil, as Anna Del Conte points out. Ricotta can serve the same purpose. Ligurians sometimes add tomatoes to the basil and garlic. Plotkin calls this pesto *corto*, and his recipe mixes half a pound of seeded and diced plum tomatoes with one cup of pesto, or roughly one part sauce and one part diced tomato flesh.

My favorite of the pesto-pasta combinations we tasted in Liguria was pesto lasagne, a lush piling on of riches that really lets you taste the pesto. Plotkin gives two recipes, and pesto lasagne is certainly easier than most kinds. Simply spread pesto over leaves of boiled pasta, dotting layers with parmigiano-reggiano and ricotta or gorgonzola.

Pesto is not limited to saucing pasta, of course. Minestrone, a soup now universal but still associated with Genoa, is incomplete without a final addition of pesto—usually a pesto without nuts, like the *pistou* that the French stir into the eponymous thick bean-and-vegetable soup. One Ligurian book suggests the nice touch of letting minestrone sit, covered, for a half hour after adding the pesto.

Once you have pesto on hand, uses for it will keep suggesting themselves. The boiled potatoes and string beans that are adjuncts to pasta dishes sauced with pesto can be a dish on their own; in her book *A Casa*, Anna Del Conte dresses the two vegetables with a cheeseless pesto. Few summer dinners are better than swordfish straight from the grill given a light coating of pesto, or beefsteak tomatoes stuffed with rice mixed and topped with pesto and baked for an hour. Would any of these dishes taste as good if you were not first invigorated by pounding aromatic ingredients? I leave that decision to your forearm and your palate. ☼



Craft's Stravinsky

Through his own artistry, the writer and conductor Robert Craft shows us anew Stravinsky's music—music Craft knows better than anyone else

BORN in Kingston, New York, into a well-read and musical family, the son of a schoolteacher and an imaginative, if struggling, businessman, Robert Craft developed an interest in twentieth-century music when he was quite young. He briefly tried his hand at composing and then directed himself toward a career as a conductor—one who would concentrate on new music and lesser-known early music, avoiding what he called the “pop masterpieces.”

He is known as the con-

ductor who introduced on record the madrigals of Gesualdo, works of Schütz, the Monteverdi Vespers of 1610, the complete oeuvre of Anton Webern, much Schoenberg, and works by Berg and Varèse and Stockhausen, among many other things. But most of all he is known for his extraordinary relationship to the life and work of Igor Stravinsky, whom he befriended in 1948, when he was twenty-four (and Stravinsky was sixty-six), and for whom he became a musical

sounding board, a source of information on music old and new, a substitute and co-conductor, a traveling companion, and an intellectual stimulus. With Stravinsky he wrote seven books in dialogue and diary form, innumerable articles, and several picture books.

Since the age of twelve Craft had hoped to study with Stravinsky. In his early twenties he sought him out in a few preliminary letters, letters seeking

advice on how to obtain performance materials for some of Stravinsky's

music. His first letter was not answered. But the next one was, and in Stravinsky's cordial initial replies (reprinted in *Selected Correspondence*) one senses that Stravinsky was increasingly aware of Craft's dedication to and knowledge of his work and of a great many other things, and the young man's potential helpfulness. These letters are surprisingly warm: Stravinsky's salutations progress from “Dear Mr. Craft” (February 10 and August 29, 1947) to “Dear

Robert Craft” (October 7) to, after their first meetings, “Dear Bob” (June 1, 1948), “Hallo, Bob” (October 8, 1948), and “Dearest Bob” (November 9, 1948). Craft's letters mention suggested reading, including W. R. Inge's *Plotinus* and English commentaries on Bossuet, the author of *Méditations sur l'Evangile*, a favorite book of Stravinsky's—volumes that Craft later sent to Stravinsky. The letters and books led to requests on Stravinsky's part for assistance in various small matters, to a meeting, and then to a concert both men conducted (Craft was conducting a full orchestra in concert for the first time). Craft became a member of the Stravinsky household for the remaining twenty-three years of the composer's life.

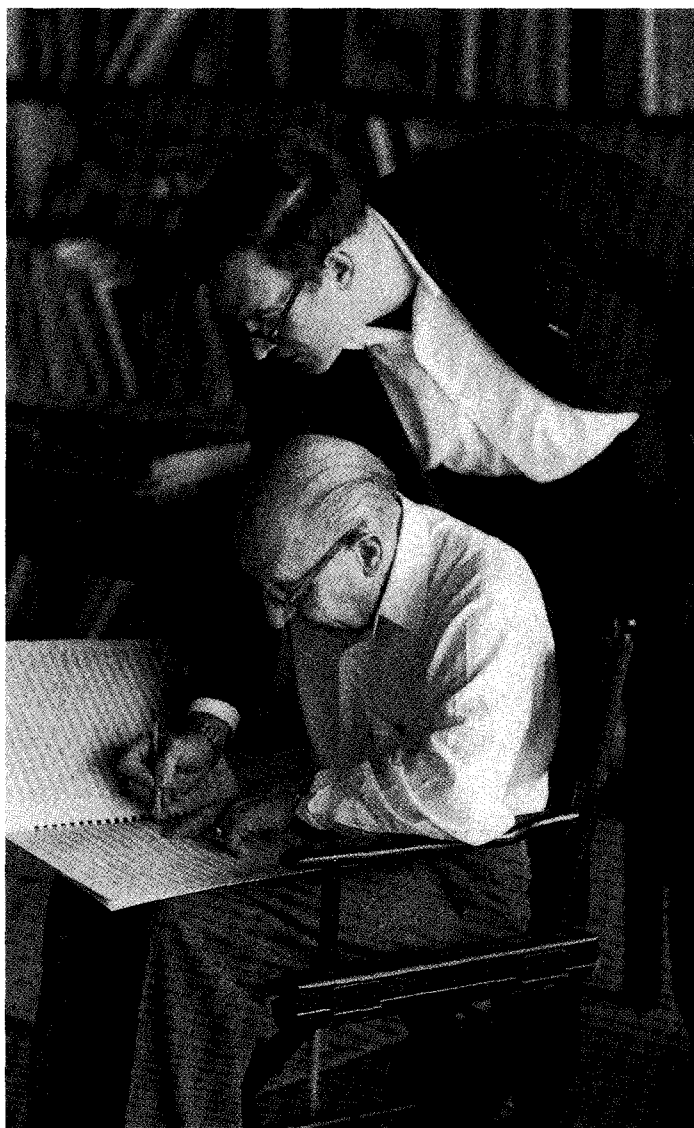
Craft's first meeting with the composer occurred on the day the Auden-Kallman libretto for *The Rake's Progress* arrived, just in time for Craft to prove useful in matters pertaining to the English language. Indeed, until his arrival the language of daily life in the Stravinsky household had been almost exclusively Russian. Craft appeared in Stravinsky's life at the moment of the composer's most serious creative crisis.

The Rake's Progress was to prove the end and culmination of a long phase of work in which Stravinsky managed to inject new life into the traditional forms and materials of tonal music. He found himself out of touch with the younger generation of composers and ignorant of the music that mattered to them (particularly the work of the Second Viennese School, as Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern became known)—music Craft knew, loved, and understood. It is hard to believe today that Stravinsky did not then even know the basic principles of twelve-tone writing. It was Craft who introduced him to, and acted as a guide in explaining, this music; the composer was a fascinated listener at many of Craft's rehearsals and performances. A new phase ensued in Stravinsky's outlook and output. The history of the music of our time would have been significantly different if Stravinsky had not at this stage of life still sought renewal, and if these two men from different backgrounds and generations had never met.

ROBERT Craft is one of the most interesting writers about music there has ever been—intellectually lively, unflinchingly direct, broad, thorough, literate, and funny. Under the guise of anonymity and the pretext of being both a witness to and an important participant in a great man's life, Craft has produced an extraordinary body of writing that reveals a strong and independent creative personality, albeit one that does not declare itself as such. Not surprisingly, he has been compared to Boswell. Critic (writing on everything from Hegel to the TV show *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman*), memoirist, travel writer, and scholar (particularly on Stravinsky, in such books as *Stravinsky in Pictures and Documents* and *Stravinsky: Glimpses of a Life*), Craft may be hard to categorize but is instantly recognizable. He is a master of understatement; multilayered and allusive by nature, he creates bubbles of surprise, feeling, and wonder in the reader's mind through indirection, wit, implication, and restraint. The writing is so compact that few sentences go by without inspiring additional trains of thought in the writer as well as the reader. The books are liberally sprinkled with long footnotes that turn out to be as full of intellectual and anecdotal goodies as the main text. Unlike many intellectuals, Craft often conveys profound emotion, but he never wallows in feeling, preferring to

express it through his observations. In descriptions he can be as dry and specific as a doctor reporting on a patient's condition: he knows the exact name for everything, and his interests and reading are so broad that it would seem he cannot be bored (it is generalizations that are dull). He certainly never bores the reader. His vocabulary is immense, but his use of words at the outer reaches of the language never feels pedantic or self-con-

scious. (Words like "animadvert," "paralipomena," and "introrse" simply come naturally to him, as do apt quotations in several languages.) Nothing human (or medical or sexual) is foreign to him; he records what's there. He is left-leaning in his view of the world, and he sides with the underdog; yet he has lived a life as rarefied as they come. One feels that he is essentially a loner. He is intellectual but not academic, and totally undoctinaire.



Robert Craft and Igor Stravinsky in Hollywood, 1962

Even in a testy mood, even when playing the role of fussy archivist (as in his essay "The Stravinsky *Nachlass* in New York and Basel"), Craft is entertaining. The quality consistently communicated in his writing is a joy in being alive.

Stravinsky had a personality at once so strong and so well barricaded that he could devote a lifetime to redirecting it, subverting it, and making it submit to rules, and yet still emerge as the dominant

voice in twentieth-century music. The plots of so many of his works—from *Le Sacre du Printemps* (1913) to *Abraham and Isaac* (1963)—represent the theme of sacrifice. In his innumerable "collaborations" with dead composers, his own idiom was made to speak through past idioms. In his writings Stravinsky spoke of finding freedom in constraints, and of the need for the Dionysian to be tamed by the Apollonian. He sought "distance" in

Oedipus Rex and the Mass by deliberately employing the "dead" Latin language. Rigorously avoiding a confessional tone, Stravinsky subsumed his own life experiences in ritual and formality—as in the composition of the serenely "classical" Symphony in C during the year that saw the deaths of his first wife, his mother, and his eldest daughter. For all this, the overwhelming impression made by his music is, to use his words, of "sensation in all its freshness." The entire freight of his psychology, of his commitment—of his meaning—is borne by the notes, timbres, and rhythms. Nowhere does the composer emerge before the curtain to ask for sympathy for the struggle that made the music possible.

It is not surprising that this man would also be capable of retaining an unmistakable, irreplaceable presence while writing his *Autobiography*, a severely reserved book in any case, with a ghostwriter, Walter

Nouvel; creating the outline for his *Poetics of Music* but not the actual text, which was written by Ravel's future biographer, Roland-Manuel; and engaging in an extraordinarily symbiotic working and writing relationship with Craft. Craft speaks of Vera Stravinsky's understanding of the relationship: "From the first, she believed that I, or someone like me, was essential to her husband if he was to remain in the midstream of new music."

WHILE Craft may sometimes be Stravinsky's advocate, he is never his surrogate. These are two separate artists who, for complex reasons, needed each other.

Stravinsky left an extraordinary recorded legacy, conducting for records virtually all his works that required a conductor—many of them several times, as recording technology improved. (Some of his pieces, including the *Serenade in A*, were deliberately composed in such a way that each movement would fit on one side of a 78-rpm record.) In some of Stravinsky's last recordings Craft was the actual conductor and Stravinsky the supervisor.

Craft has now completed fifteen Stravinsky CDs for MusicMasters (three are yet to be released), which, with two other recordings, make up his own Stravinsky series. Along with the recordings of Stravinsky himself and those of Pierre Boulez, they are the most important accounts we have of these vibrant and moving works. In some cases they are the only available accounts.

Craft knows this body of work more thoroughly than anyone alive with the exception of Pierre Boulez (who has, unfortunately, avoided performing some of Stravinsky's neoclassical works), and knows firsthand the composer's wishes. He has access to an exceptional group of musicians—including members of the Orchestra of Saint Luke's and the London Symphony Orchestra. These CDs show Craft's Stravinsky. Although he has written that a doctor once commented on the similarity of their nervous systems, Craft must know well that he and Stravinsky are two distinct musical personalities, with distinct temperaments. And the way a conductor's temperament influences a performance goes beyond the specifics of his or her conscious choices. It is safe to say that even the old performances recorded by Craft in Stravinsky's presence were different from what they would have been in his absence, just as the performances of the New York City Ballet with Balanchine watching from the wings—as he used to do—were no doubt changed by his presence.

As a conductor Craft has two traits that disqualify him from the current conducting glamour circuit: self-effacement and fidelity to the score. He is a conductor very much after Stravinsky's heart, one

who opposes what most people would think of as interpretation.

Stravinsky wrote in 1924 of his work the Octet:

To interpret a piece is to realize its portrait, and what I demand is the realization of the piece itself and not of its portrait. . . . In general, I consider that music is only able to solve musical problems; and nothing else, neither the literary nor the picturesque, can be in music of any real interest. The play of the musical elements is the thing.

The negative side of an undertaking like the CD series is that the sheer mass of material to be covered and the consistency of personnel involved may result in some performances that lack a special sense of occasion. Elsewhere when single works by Stravinsky are chosen, however, they tend to be the same few. Craft has compiled these CDs as interesting programs of music and not, as is more common, according to genre (all symphonies, all chamber pieces, all vocal music). Here works large and small and from all Stravinsky's phases rub elbows. Any one disc, then, enables listeners who know only the warhorses to understand better the context in which they were written—the composer's body of work.

To speak of major and minor pieces in Stravinsky is in any case misleading. Stravinsky wasted no notes, and neither did he toss off trivial works. His output over the years was steady but not voluminous, and from what one can tell, he composed his often fast-tempo, highly energized music at a deliberate pace. There is a chiseled precision to the writing, without filler or formula. Despite the resemblance in some features to Britten, Prokofiev, Milhaud, and Hindemith, each of whom wrote considerably more music, Stravinsky is much closer in working habits and artistic outlook to Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern. The shorter pieces—*Berceuses du Chat*, say, and *Scherzo à la Russe*—are each unique, often create their own genre, and have a gemlike radiance. Some, such as the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*, which lasts a mere eight minutes, have a vastness of impact that makes the question of scale irrelevant, to paraphrase Stravinsky on Webern. To be sure, a few pieces are of an occasional nature (a tiny choral setting of a Balanchine melody, for example), but these, too, put one in touch with music-

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making on an exceptional level. Even the arrangements, such as the "Star-Spangled Banner" harmonization for male chorus, tell you something you did not know about what music can be. (How remarkable that with the deft removal of a few melodic elements and a rethinking of the harmonization, this rather ugly tune takes on a hymnlike purity and nobility.)

No one could accuse these performances of lacking vitality. If anything, one might occasionally wish for a slower tempo. But the performances are sonorous and dashing, not dry. Craft often takes the slower passages somewhat faster than is marked in the score, whereas Stravinsky often took the same passages drastically slower than marked. In addition, the fast tempi in Craft are usually somewhat faster than Stravinsky's. In Stravinsky's performances there was, then, more contrast in tempo, and also a kind of weight—particularly in the bass lines—that is hard to define but has not been captured by any other conductor, including Craft.

In recordings made of Stravinsky in rehearsal one hears his startlingly low and resonant voice (he was a tiny man), latent with a kind of explosive anger, urging on the players and grunting out the bite of attacks and rhythm; one hears an extraordinary primal energy of rhythmic sense. Just as he upended the relationship between harmony and rhythm in some of his music, with harmony becoming static and rhythm becoming the source of motion, so, too, Stravinsky often reversed traditional notions of melody and inner parts, with the melody almost standing still and the inner voices telling the story. The slow tempo at which Stravinsky recorded the final passage of the *Symphony of Psalms* allows for a great amplification of the expressivity of the inner voices, such as the alto part and the wonderful fourth trumpet line. Craft's version, both ethereal and very brisk, makes one more conscious of the way the rhythmic patterns of the ostinato supporting bass line and the rapt, awe-struck chorus interlock. A similar comparison can be made between the Stravinsky and Craft versions of the sublime ending of the 1966 Requiem Canticles. Perhaps it would be inappropriate to expect Craft to duplicate such mystical moments. Craft believes in the prayer; Stravinsky was praying.

On the podium Craft exudes his own cool, repressed joy, like someone who has heard some marvelous news but is holding it back. There is a no-nonsense dynamism to his approach—he communicates to his listeners an absolute faith in the music itself.

SOME of the CDs fuse into strong entities; others remain simply collections of marvelous pieces. The most outstanding, in my view, are volumes III, IV, and V in the MusicMasters series, and the recording of *Orpheus* and *Le Baiser de la Fée* on Koch International Classics. *Orpheus* is a masterpiece that could have been created only by an older composer (Stravinsky was sixty-five when he wrote it), so seasoned and restrained is its grief—but it is still full of the freshness of youthful discovery. The line of Craft's performance never falters as it unfolds the tale over the course of a fleet half hour. So vivid is the composer's aural depiction of ancient times that one begins unwittingly to hear it as the re-creation of a memory. But this is also a deeply mid-century American work. The solo playing of London Symphony Orchestra members (especially clarinet, french horn, and cello) could not be better.

Among the delights of Volume V is the gorgeous Ode of 1943. Cobbled together from unused fragments that had been intended for a film, this work is normally treated as a pleasant diversion. Here the first movement is revealed as a luminous wonder of contrapuntal writing. This CD is also notable for its first-rate performance of the exceptionally original and witty work *Renard*, based on a Russian fable.

The American Stravinsky, Volume IV, is a joy from start to finish, and includes a performance of *Agon* featuring the superb violinist Rolf Schulte, an excellent *Dumbarton Oaks*, a fine *Scènes de Ballet*, and the irresistible *Scherzo à la Russe*.

Perhaps most valuable of all is Volume III, which contains one of Stravinsky's tenderest, most lyrical, and least-known large-scale works, *Perséphone*, along with four other unique compositions: *Zvezdoliki*, in its best recorded performance; *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*, in its majestic and hitherto unrecorded original version; the Concertino for Twelve Instruments; and the

Octet of 1923, in arguably its best recording. Also important to mention is the beautiful recording on Volume VIII of the seldom-heard Cantata of 1952, one of the most moving pieces of the second half of the century, with its unforgettable tenor solo sung peerlessly by Thomas Bogdan. Other listeners might choose to mention different volumes. All contain revelatory performances of works that even now are too little known.

Craft's knowledge of the original manuscripts, corrections of mistakes, understanding of tempi, and familiarity with every note of Stravinsky's complete oeuvre and of the relationships between works make these CDs precious documents. Craft also has a sense of the continuity of Stravinsky's output across stylistic shifts and of the varied performing approaches that Stravinsky himself took over the years with his music. Where other conductors might bring out details the listener has previously missed, or create out of this or that passage a novel effect, sometimes by distorting the composer's intentions, Craft creates amazement by realizing the composer's intentions—intentions Stravinsky himself may even have forgotten by the time he made his own recordings. For example, many of his pieces, such as *Les Noces* and the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*, create a collage of tempi and musical characters that are not only carefully interrelated but also all relate to one basic underlying tempo. When the proper proportions among the competing tempi are attained, the music becomes magically unified; one hears the various episodes as meshing gears in one large machine. What emerges again and again, especially if one applies this sense of the connectedness of the episodes to the often "episodic" ballet scores of Stravinsky's middle period, is a feeling of wholeness.

In our loud and sometimes coarse age how delicate, life-giving, and powerful this music is, achieving expressivity through precision, art, and the musical *mot juste* rather than with sledgehammer strokes. That this group of CDs is a labor of love and devotion is apparent in every recording. Indeed, the sterling qualities it represents are the very ones that may have prevented it from being properly appreciated as the important musical event it is. ☼

The Torch and the Hearth

Fire, this book argues, has been the central ecological factor in the making of the European landscape, an abiding symbol of Western civilization, and a forge for ideas about nature from the Neolithic to the Cold War

by Steven Stoll

VESTAL FIRE

by Stephen Pyne.
University of Washington,
659 pages, \$34.95.

FIRE is a chemical reaction requiring heat, oxygen, and fuel, and its domestication by human beings distinctively shaped the landscape and the history of Europe. Fire does not destroy things in the natural environment; rather, it converts matter from one form to another. Organisms become elements. Carbon and water are released from the cells of plants and animals and made available to be recombined into other plants and animals, in a cycle that is essential to the renewal of life. Flame reshuffles the biological deck and deals the cards to the various players in an ecosystem. Without it, fuel piles up on the forest floor; seeds that need a burn in order to germinate never do; trees grow old and weak. Fire became a tool equaled only by the plough in its implications for the environment of Europe. Indeed, Stephen Pyne writes, before it was contained by edict, forestry, and the internal-combustion engine, fire and the plough were inseparable, with ash feeding the hunger of the furrow with the nutrients that crops removed. Crackling wheat stubble turned the dross of harvested fields into fertilizer—a conversion that made future harvests and the endurance of agriculture itself possible. And by preparing meadows for browsing and by thinning forests to encourage the growth of timber, fire made other forms of natural capital, all of them essential to the rise of pastoralism and the farmstead. Fire illuminated rituals, ani-



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mated myth and religion, and resided in the hearth—the homeplace of settled society. Human beings made Europe their home when they burned it.

This is the subject of *Vestal Fire*, Stephen Pyne's fifth book about fire in history. It is an enormous work, filled with learning, vast conclusions, and many assertions, none more spectacular than the claim in its subtitle to relate "An Environmental History, Told Through Fire, of Europe and Europe's Encounter With the World." Can a single chemical reaction reveal very much about the human relationship with the European environment? Is Europe's history made more expansive or is it reduced by this approach? And what kind of history does fire make?

It is the central argument of *Vestal Fire* that fire, like plants and animals, is specific to the places where it is native. Nothing about fire, however, is so simple. For fire is both nature and culture, weather and tool, lightning and ax. Exactly where and when fire ceased to be simply an attribute of a particular ecology and became the force that human beings used to shape the grasslands and forests of Europe can never be clear. The "fire regime" is the way in which a particular people used fire in a particular place to manipulate nature in the pursuit of sustenance. Just as people have their agricultural and hunting practices, they have their fire regimes.

This is a book about the fire regimes of Europe. Pyne defines anthropogenic flame in five distinct regions of Europe. In the Mediterranean, pastoralism and agriculture emerged as two poles in an ecosystem bound together by recurrent burning. Central Europe, typically too damp for wildfire, was the place where Continental farmers perfected the application of flame to fallow. In conjunction with crop rotation, burned fallow became the means of replenishing fertility in agricultural soils. Pyne writes, in a wonderful insight, "Instead of farm and flock rotating through the landscape," as they did in Mediterranean Europe, "the landscape, in effect, rotated through them." The story then moves north to dark and boggy boreal Europe, perhaps the most unlikely place for a fire history to linger. In fact Swedes and Finns practiced and even perfected swidden, the periodic slashing and burning that made forests

into fields over extensive areas. Pyne tells of fire in Eurasian Europe and Atlantic Europe, in each case sketching the ecology and history of regional fire practices—always a mixture of what climate made possible and what people needed from land. The book then moves to islands and other continents to trace the spread of European fire beyond Europe.

THIS synopsis suggests nothing of the narrative tension in *Vestal Fire*. A fire regime can be tampered with only at great cost to an environment and a people, and Europe's fire did not remain in a Neolithic garden. Indeed, the control and suppression of fire and its wanton transfer from place to place give these stories something of a conceptual unity. A fire regime may be restricted by law, or it may be displaced from where it functions to where it does not, or it may be used to defy centralized authority. Pyne calls the story of Cyprus a "miniature" of Mediterranean fire history, and it is also a miniature of this theme of control.

By treaty with the Ottoman Empire, in 1878, the British took over the administration of Cyprus in order to keep an eye on the Suez Canal. They brought with them to the island certain assumptions about the proper use of land and imposed a uniform forest-conservation policy on an environment that had never been without fire. As they saw it, irrational pastoralism maintained the upper hand over rational agriculture, and to make things right they declared war on herders and their flocks of nearly feral goats. A war on goats was a war on fire, since the people of Cyprus fed the one through the other. The British and the Cypriots could not have seen things more differently. Cyprus burned regularly: to make fields, to clear forests for vineyards and pasturage, to stimulate the production of resin for pitch. The British, in contrast, had all but quelled their own fire by the beginning of the nineteenth century. English intellectuals called burning the ground for any purpose mean, squandering, and archaic. So a particular kind of suppression—an anti-fire regime—came to Cyprus, and Pyne details the almost total failure of that policy. Unwilling to give up a practice that was inextricable from their pastoral way of life, the Cypriots made trees into torches to fight grazing control and

refused to fight fires when they appeared. Insurrection gave new fuel to an old nationalist fire when Greek Cypriots demanded union with their mother country. As the author puts it, a pyrophobic civilization had met a pyrophilic one.

The rise of pyrophobia is the essence of Europe's fire history. Louis XIV, British hunters of the nineteenth century, and urban conservationists all attempted to seize torches from the hands of wandering peoples. Pyne is very clear about the power of herding to order a landscape. Though we have little obvious evidence of it today, fire was the primary tool of keepers of flocks. And because flocks competed with farms for resources, claiming outfields for burning and browsing, this form of transhumant migration "dictated the whole structure of land use." The same could be said of swidden, which spread over vast regions of Scandinavia and as far north as the Arctic Circle, and eventually ceased after centuries, under pressure from wars and statutes. Centralizing kingdoms, Enlightenment intellectuals, and twentieth-century foresters refused to tolerate folk fire. The history of fire in Europe is in large part the history of its isolation from fens and moors and its containment inside the furnaces of industry.

Unsympathetic readers may charge that *Vestal Fire* reduces history to the ideas and practices surrounding one ecological factor. Should we also have wood history, water history, and soil history? What could be the justification for taking this particular slice of nature and constructing the entire history of Europe around it? Pyne declares that "civilization was impossible without fire; and the tended fire became Western civilization's most elementary emblem of itself." Yet Pyne takes fire as a lens, not a limit; a focus (the word means "hearth" in Latin), not a blinder. In effect, he reaches through fire to grasp his true subject—agriculture and land use from prehistory to the present. Time and again, field, forest, and pasture tie the book together, with fire as the primary tool for shifting among them. *Vestal Fire* is not so much a reduction as a synthesis, but like all good syntheses, it depends on some degree of reduction, some organizing concept to filter the detail that can overwhelm a work of sweeping understanding.

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Israel effectively secures NATO's southeastern flank, without having a single American soldier stationed in its territory. Still, the superb military installations, the air and sea lift capabilities, the equipment and food storage capacity, and the trained manpower to maintain and repair sophisticated U.S. equipment are instant-

ly at hand in Israel. It is the only country in the area that makes itself available to the United States, in any contingency. **Only fraction of aid stays in Israel.** There is no other country in the Middle East except Israel that can be considered to have a stable government or populace friendly to the United States. There is much danger that any military aid to Arab countries, and military equipment given or sold to them, will suffer the same fate as the untold billions of dollars and priceless military secrets that were lost to our enemies in the debacle of Iran. Is Saudi Arabia more stable? Egypt? Jordan? Kuwait? Judge for yourself!

"American aid to Israel is a two-way street. Aid to Israel is America's greatest defense bargain."

Only a fraction of the aid given stays in Israel. By far the largest share remains with American defense contractors. Peter McPherson, former administrator of the Agency for International Development, estimated that every billion dollars of aid to Israel creates 60,000 to 70,000 jobs in the United States.

Compared to the \$1.8 billion yearly military aid to Israel, the U.S. contributes more than \$130 billion(!) every year to the defense of Europe and more than \$30 billion to the defense of Japan, Korea, and the Far East. Over 300,000 U.S. troops are stationed with NATO and over 30,000 U.S. troops in the Far East. In contrast, not one single U.S. soldier needs to be stationed and put at risk in Israel. U.S. military analysts estimate that the U.S. would have to spend the equivalent of \$150 billion a year in the Middle East to maintain a force equivalent to Israel's.

There are many other benefits that the U.S. military derives from Israel. Israel is the only country that has gained battlefield experience with U.S. weapons. This experience is immediately conveyed to the U.S. Enormous quantities of captured Soviet weapons and defense systems were turned over to the U.S. military for analysis. Israel, in the light of its experience, continually modifies U.S. weapons systems. For instance, Israeli scientists have made over 200 improvements in the F-15 alone and similar improvements, mostly in avionics, in later-generation planes. It would be more in line with reality if military aid to Israel were classified as part of the defense budget, rather than as "aid". Israel is truly America's unsinkable aircraft carrier in the Middle East. Former President Reagan put it well: "The fall of Iran has increased Israel's value as perhaps the only remaining strategic asset in the region on which the United States can fully rely." American aid to Israel is a two-way street. Aid to Israel is America's greatest defense bargain.

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2A

THE subject and organization of this book will remind some readers of a school of historical thought that first appeared in France in the years before the Second World War. Founded by Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch, and named after their journal, *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale*, the *Annales* school became a central point of origin for both social and environmental history, because it directed scholarship away from statecraft and battles and toward the underpinnings of society. Economy, geography, climate, trade, transportation, technology, and demographics—these give rise to history. Monarchs, with their palace struggles and perpetual wars, seemed unimportant to this school, because they depended on so many things totally beyond their control. As the historian Fernand Braudel explained, where the old history asked "Who played major roles and who minor?" the new history called statesmen "more acted upon than actors." Further attention to Kings and Queens became hard to justify when the very structure that made government possible lay unexamined. If these ideas sound about as revolutionary as charcoal, it is because they have since been so well integrated into the study of the past that most students have no idea that historians ever thought differently.

Yet few scholars have followed Braudel's lead by writing history in the *longue durée*—that is, on a scale that challenges the comfortable frame of human time and events. When they pick their subjects and write their books, most historians think in decades or lifetimes or perhaps the span of a century or two. But Braudel's epic work *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (1949) begins with the formation of the Mediterranean basin itself and the charming question "What exactly is a mountain?" The Battle of Lepanto, in 1571 (his original reason for writing the book), comes 1,058 pages later. Rare is the historian who can maintain an argument (and a captivating style) over thousands of years, through gigantic climatic, social, and economic changes, and arrive at some meaningful destination.

Vestal Fire comes closer to doing this than any other book I've read recently. Fire allows Pyne to consider climate and

geology in a serious way, and not simply by way of introduction. It takes him through ancient civilizations, to the rise of the modern state, to colonization and the worldwide spread of European fire—a very long view of the past. And as with Braudel, the reader begins to feel that the epic scale is just the author's point: fire dwarfs the typical events of history. War and revolution become moments in fire history. Fire also has no clear beginning and no end. As the author puts it, in the first and last sentences of the book, "Before there was Europe, there was fire. . . . After Europe there would still be fire."

Not all readers will follow Pyne to the last of these swirling chapters, where there is no Battle of Lepanto to put the long view into perspective. Some will resent the lack of detail in many places, and the breezy way in which the narrative moves through complicated stories. This is a history of Europe that only glances at the fall of the Roman Empire, has little to say about cities or disease, and hardly mentions water. And although the book presents examples of conflict over the control of forests and the right of common people to burn, these stories are lacking in political context. In attempting to make all of Europe fit a unified fire history, Pyne shreds the careful studies of social historians. Social movements connected to land use get only a mention, as do the anxieties of peasants in times of revolution and war. Pyne certainly proves that a chemical reaction can make elegant and lively history, but it needs to be said that there are few individuals of any importance here, and they mostly comment on events and leave the scene as quickly as they entered. All of this adds up to a vagueness that is the price the author pays for attempting to synthesize so much.

Readers searching for the deep history of the global environmental crisis or a cautionary tale of civilization's rise and fall will find little of either in *Vestral Fire*. This is a narrative about widespread ecological change, but not one that equates change with decline. And change never moves in just one direction, with just one outcome. The tools that human beings use to manipulate the natural environment often leave behind obvious and unambiguous evidence of

their work, but fire is a tool that depletes nothing, commodifies nothing, and does not, like ploughs or factories, concentrate land in a single use. Fire can clear land for planting or clear a city of its inhabitants—it all depends on who's holding the torch. Damage often comes when attempts are made to eliminate fire. In this book conservation and forestry paradoxically do more harm than good, by refusing to allow fires to burn. For European foresters "modernization meant fire suppression," and they extended this principle from the metropole to the countryside to the distant colony. But forestry claimed too much control: when conservationists made small fires impossible, they made large and dangerous fires inevitable. When they rejected the positive uses of combustion to blend trees and crops into a unified ecology, they committed the state to endless management, with mixed results. Fire always escaped where Europeans tried to confine it, and Pyne suggests that although escape violated the boundaries of culture, it represented the restoration of a deeper order. Fire, it seems, refuses to teach a single lesson.

Pyne breaks more ground in interpretation than in research. He bases most of his conclusions on secondary and published primary sources, many of them in translation. The volume is clearly organized according to region, but its parts (books in and of themselves) do not build on one another. It's not really necessary to read this book front to back—a fact that suggests a lack of narrative development. It could hardly be otherwise with a subject so formless. As the author states, fire has no existence apart from the conditions that make it possible—not the kind of subject that is easy to write about. Yet Pyne writes about it with great energy and splendid ability. Portions of this book contain beautiful prose, forceful constructions, and striking insights. What makes reading it so thrilling is that the author is vigorously thinking through the meaning of fire on every page.

WE are left at the end with contemporary fire—restricted, hated, and almost totally isolated from daily life for all but those few people who still burn their garbage. Playing with fire is one of the paramount transgressions of child-

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hood, and the fear of fire that adults try to instill in children is reflected in the association of flames with evil. One of Pyne's examples stands out here. A ban by the Catholic Church on the needfire ritual in 734 went ignored all over Europe, so priests moved to preside over the ceremony, in which a purificatory fire was created and sustained to protect a community from hardship. In presiding, however, the Church imposed its own moral interpretation on the rite. In Pyne's telling, the priests "reworked the imagery of fire—stoking hell with eternal flames, creating a fiery purgatory." No longer a force in the landscape or a shrine at the heart of a community, fire became an engine of work and a tool of the household. It remains the vestal fire, the perpetual flame in the hearth of the Roman goddess Vesta which symbolizes the perpetuation of society and is never allowed to escape.

The badness and sacredness of fire is one end to the story; its banality and danger is another. The primal fire that nurtured soils and human community became as blunted as safety matches in a gas-station convenience store. But just because fire is common does not mean we have tamed it. In fact, our unthinking use of it only heightens the possibility of its destructive liberation, resulting in neighborhoods turned to cinders. For the truth is that fire is never better controlled than when it is scorching the hills and forests of a transhumant region or smoldering in the field of a boreal farmer. Hidden from view, suppressed by law and Smokey the Bear, relegated to cigarettes and the Fourth of July, it is caged and dangerous. And let us not forget—as Pyne does not—that a dark fire in the mind of Western civilization has escaped, not to spark the grass but to ignite books and bodies. From 1933 to 1945 Europe burned, in bonfires of libraries and inside concentration-camp ovens. Enlightenment fire rained down on London and Hiroshima. European fire—rational, controlled, and vicious—haunts the twentieth century.

Vestal Fire is a work of marvelous intellectual force and considerable learning—the most recent volume in a series of books (called the "Cycle of Fire") that have revealed an astonishing history where historians never before thought to look for one. Fire is central to the envi-

ronment and culture of Europe, Stephen Pyne says, because in order for Europeans to domesticate fire, they first had to domesticate themselves. Settled agricultural peoples have struggled for centuries to come to terms with the power they hold to coax life by burning it up. The manipulation of fire—like the exile from Eden—made the earth a truly human place by inflicting upon people the knowledge of choices in a world they could change. Civilization holds this difficult relationship with nature: it lives in the space between destruction and creation that is also the dwelling place of fire. ☼

The Burden of James Dickey

by Peter Davison

SUMMER OF DELIVERANCE:

A Memoir of Father and Son

by Christopher Dickey.
Simon & Schuster, 288 pages,
\$24.00.

JAMES Dickey was hugely gifted and hugely flawed, a tremendous reader and a born writer, an athlete and an intellectual, a deep thinker and a drinker, a composer of burly and extremist poetry, an excessive performer, a hopeless liar, an inveterate womanizer, a father who gave himself airs. This furnished much for a son, especially a talented son, to flee from. Christopher Dickey writes,

The whisky on my father's breath, a smell that seemed to come from deep in the bellows of his lungs, started to frighten me. . . . I'd smell the whisky and know that whatever I said to him would go past him and whatever he replied would be words spoken to the air. He was my father still, but he was somebody I didn't know.

Though *Summer of Deliverance* tells more than other books are likely to about the life and death of James Dickey, it should be even better appreciated for what it achieves in telling the truth about the ways a son gives meaning to the weight of a father—Aeneas carrying Anchises out of burning Troy. American southerners somehow understand more about the truth of the past than northerners do; perhaps because, like William Faulkner, they know that "the past is never dead. It's not even past," and consequently know how to tell us more-resonant stories. Christopher Dickey's book is southern in that it inhabits the past and the present at once: "Was I the grown man talking to his aged father, or the little boy talking to his dad?" Various observers have for years been preparing to write about the life and work of James Dickey, but those who admired his talent—or the best of his talent—have doubtless been facing that eventuality with a sinking feeling. Much of the redemptive job of biography has now been done by the poet's elder son.

James Dickey seemed to come out of nowhere in the 1960s, arriving in a flood of poetry—strange, exalted verse stories. The poems in *Drowning With Others* (1962), *Helmets* (1964), and *Buckdancer's Choice* (which deservedly won the National Book Award in 1966) may have strutted like someone wearing elevator shoes, but they soon justified themselves in the way they set forth one self after another, against the backdrops of war, of lust and growth, of a southern landscape dripping with anticipation. In *Poems 1957–1967*, Dickey's roaring poems took on various personae: an adulterer, a frenzied pilot, a panther, a sex fiend, a country preacher, and a guitar player. In such fierce lyrics as "Kudzu," "Cherrylog Road," "The Sheep Child," and "Adultery," and on larger canvases like "The Fiend," "Falling," "The Firebombing," and "May Day Sermon," Dickey seemed to be pushing at the frontiers of poetic narrative. In 1967 *The Atlantic Monthly* published an article in which I compared, with certain reservations, Dickey's poetic stature to that of Robert Lowell, the reigning influence for many of the younger poets of the time.

When, in 1970, Dickey published his

first novel, *Deliverance*, he seemed yet again to be stretching the sort of writing a poet could manage to do. *Deliverance* was excerpted in *The Atlantic*, and that macho tale of four middle-class Atlantan males embarked on an unpredictably perilous weekend canoe trip down a wild river in Georgia became one of the runaway best sellers of its year. Soon afterward it was made into a movie—a star vehicle for Burt Reynolds and a smash hit. But although numerous James Dickey books were published over the next twenty-five years, neither Dickey's poems nor his subsequent novels, *Alnilam* (1987) and *To the White Sea* (1993), ever achieved the same level of quality.

Summer of Deliverance tells Christopher Dickey's story of both men, father and son, with an unflinching rigor that most such stories never attain. The challenge of the truth about the poet estranged the younger from the older man, yet in the end, when the son had grown into his forties and the father had descended into his seventies and was dying, they both rose to meet it. There remained, after all, enough love between them to survive all the enmities that must separate father and son. As Christopher writes, "Even when I fled him, I missed him."

JAMES Dickey was not diffident. Imposing, swaggering, and fearsomely intelligent, he put himself forward, a bullyboy in poetry criticism, granting interviews and even improvising self-interviews by way of staking a claim for his literary ambitions. The greatest obstacle to Christopher's understanding was his father's lying: James spun all sorts of tales about hand-to-hand grappling with black bears in the forest, about his imaginary diseases, about his conquests of women.

"My father had begun to make himself up. And me. He would not tolerate for a minute the world as it was." Call that creative, if you will, but it makes for a hard life, and also for a difficult biography. It does, however, give the son a tremendous incentive to fix on the actual truth about his father. Christopher Dickey, talented and sensing himself flawed by whatever standard he chose as measurement, accepted the challenge of his father's mendacity and pursued it to the

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Nine-Hole Course

1a. T(H)RUST 1b. TH(e) + ROUGH 1c. H(ELM)ET (the anag.) 1d. T + RIFLE 1e. (r)EGRET
2a. T(ALL)IES 2b. STA(R)T UP (a putt's anag.) 2c. PROLEGOMENA (anag.) 3a. AT + T(I) + C
3b. C + HE + L + SEA 3c. AFORE (a four homophone) 3d. E(A)R + MUFF 3e. FEE + LOUT
4a. TRES + S 4b. SH + A + M 4c. MOORLAND (anag.) 5a. DIVINERS (anag.) 5b. SALT (odd letters) 5c. T(h)E + RMS 5d. STEER (double def.) 5e. R + EEL 6a. LOUISIER (anag.)
6b. ROLLER (r for h in holler) 6c. R + EEKS 6d. S + AGER 6e. RAM (double def.) 7a. MEGA + ERA 7b. (I)ART 7c. THEMES (lisped seems) 8a. SAME + CH 8b. HER + R 8c. RAVI (hidden) 9a. ISHMAEL (anag.) 9b. LEIGH (homophone) 9c. HEAR + T

very end of James's life, in 1997. The resulting narrative subscribes to a plot as valid as the tale of carrying a father out of Troy or founding, with a twin brother, a city upon seven hills.

While *Deliverance* was being filmed, in 1971, the nineteen-year-old Christopher, married and a new father, was granted a stand-in job on location and spent the summer watching the activity on the set and behind the scenes. He was filmed for a cameo appearance in the movie as a corpse, though the scene was later cut. There's a certain ghastly reality in that impersonation, enabling the son to confront what every son has to face sooner or later: the mortal struggle between him and his father. The son who does not face this truth will be the weaker for it. Any biographer attempting to re-create James Dickey's life would have to compare his protagonist's public presentation of himself with his private actions; would have to account by some objective standard for the shortfall between the writer's early work and his later pretentious windiness. A son, unlike a biographer, can measure his father's reality by his own eyewitnessing. Whereas a biographer, that very special form of prosecutor, can only present the evidence, a son can rely on the felt testimony of his own life and experience, his own failures and successes, to assess against his blood and memory the reality of what he has witnessed.

Christopher Dickey watched his father and his mother sink into deep alcoholism, watched the enormous talents of the poet dissipate, watched his mother die of complications from cirrhosis and his father marry, in haste, one of his young students, who later became addicted to narcotics. Meanwhile, the abashed son underwent his own struggle to realize his talents as a journalist and a novelist, to live through the failure of one marriage and enjoy the success of a second. He became a foreign correspondent, first for *The Washington Post* and later for *Newsweek*, filing copy from El Salvador, Nicaragua, Cairo, Tehran, and other remote stations, where he remained uneasily insulated from the agony of his father's sodden and turbulent life in South Carolina. Only after Christopher had become *Newsweek's* bureau chief in Paris, in

James Dickey's old age, when the giant's health finally and appallingly broke down after years of alcohol abuse, did Christopher and his wife, Carol, manage apprehensively to approach James and try to negotiate, in his last couple of years of sobriety and shame, a certain reconciliation. It will surprise no one that the son learned more at this late stage than the father did. The old always have a little more to teach. From the young, if they can be patient and

honest enough, no secrets are hidden. The results glowingly emerge in this touching book, as powerful and poignant as *Home Before Dark*, Susan Cheever's comparable memoir about her father, John. Occasionally Christopher Dickey's writing stumbles; sometimes fewer adjectives would have conveyed more meaning; sometimes a frog constricts the throat; but the candor and decency of this narrative seldom fail the reader. ☞

BRIEF REVIEWS



The Battle of Glorieta

by Don E. Alberts.

Texas A&M,

248 pages, \$29.95.

According to Mr. Alberts, the battle of Glorieta Pass, which in 1862 rolled for several days along a cranky, narrow loop of the Santa Fe Trail, was more significant than most historians acknowledge. He makes a convincing, and very well written, argument to support that opinion. The Confederate campaign originated, in Texas, with a former U.S. Army officer named Henry Hopkins Sibley who persuaded Jefferson Davis to commission him a brigadier general and authorize him to raise a force of mounted volunteers to "pursue the invasion and occupation of New Mexico Territory." Davis may not have known that Sibley meant to take Colorado, swing west to Los Angeles, and secure the whole Southwest for the Confederacy. The plan was to live off the country and resupply themselves by capturing Federal forts. The essential target was Fort Union, the Federal supply center for the whole region and a major control point on the route west. Fort Union, well aware of the Confederate advance, appealed for reinforcements and got the First Colorado Volunteers.

They were a rowdy lot, commanded by Colonel John P. Slough, a well-known Denver lawyer, with the assistance of Samuel Tappan, a member of a prominent abolitionist family, and John Chivington, the "Fighting Parson," a Methodist clergyman who deserved his sobriquet. The commander at Fort Union, Colonel Gabriel Paul, was outraged to discover that Slough had finagled superior rank and was determined to use it. Slough commandeered, in Paul's view, far too many of the fort's regular troops and headed south toward Santa Fe to break up the Confederates before they reached the fort. The Confederates, by that time short of supplies, had left what they had in a base camp and were hustling north. The parties met with mutual surprise. It was an intricate battle, excitingly described by Mr. Alberts, who includes lively details, good maps, and much quotation. As usual in Civil War histories, the quotations are vivid, and prove that the people of that time, some of whom never got beyond grade school, had an enviable control of language and true power of expression. Did they get it from *McGuffey Readers*? Sermons? Political orators? Whatever the source, they had it, and their letters and diaries give the battle the quality of personal life. As a fight, Glorieta has to be con-

sidered a draw. The parties simply withdrew. But the Federals withdrew only to Fort Union, while the Rebels, so bereft of everything that the Yankees gave them medical supplies for their wounded and tools to bury their dead, withdrew all the long way to Texas and never came north again. Mr. Alberts has reason to call Glorieta the "Gettysburg of the West."

Ship of Gold in the Deep Blue Sea

by Gary Kinder.
Atlantic Monthly Press,
507 pages, \$27.50.

The *Central America*, a side-wheel steamer with three masts, was bound from Panama to New York in September of 1857, carrying more than \$1.5 million in California gold plus an indeterminate amount in the luggage of the 500 passengers. She left Havana on Tuesday and encountered a vicious hurricane. Saturday night, "her boats gone, her foremast cut down, her sails in tatters, her furniture and dishes broken, her staterooms deep in seawater, her engines long silent," she went down in approximately 8,000 feet of water, 200 miles off the Atlantic coast. And all that gold went with her. The wreck caused as much excitement as the loss of the *Titanic*. Every scrap of information that could be extracted from the few survivors was recorded somewhere, enabling Mr. Kinder to reconstruct the disaster, and many of the people involved, with hair-raising precision. The people were interesting. One really cares about the literary captain, the honeymooners, the young poet—even the canary. Mr. Kinder makes the shipwreck so enthralling that it seems any later events are doomed to anticlimax. Not so. The text proceeds to Tommy Thompson, born in 1952, a highly original and inventive engineer, who determined to locate, and salvage, the *Central America* for the future good of deepwater exploration and development. He was affronted by the term "treasure hunter." The gold was bait to attract backers for an expensive and uncertain venture. He found the backers, and the necessary specialists (some as eccentric as he), along with rivals, chicanery, legal complications, and weather that sent a heavy

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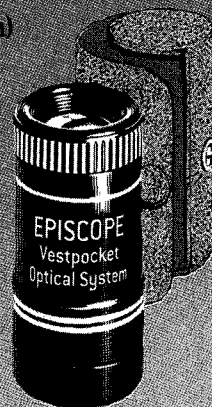
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piece of equipment slamming around the deck like a loose cannon. Mr. Thompson was a good planner, but some things cannot be foreseen. On its first run the expedition was beset by a drunken cook who served only fried chicken and the drunken captain of a shrimper called the *Joe Christmas*. If a fiction writer of anything but fantasy combined that cook and the *Christmas*, he would be accused of imaginative excess. Even readers familiar with Mr. Thompson's salvage operation are likely to find new information in Mr. Kinder's text, and for those with no previous acquaintance, it is a truly great tale, cleverly organized and expertly written.

Night Comes to the Cretaceous

by James Lawrence Powell.
W. H. Freeman,
250 pages, \$22.95.

Mr. Powell is a geologist and the president and director of the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History. He reports on the semi-accidental discovery by the distinguished physicist Luis Alvarez and his son, Walter, of the evidence indicating that the extinction of the dinosaurs was caused by the impact on Earth of an asteroid the size of Mount Everest. Naturally the Alvarez theory has produced opposition and countertheories and a spate of crater-hunting. Mr. Powell describes the whole debate in a text that deals well with the inevitable technicalities and will be found very readable by anyone interested in the history of Earth and the problems that beset scientists seeking to understand it.

Saving Molly

by Dr. James Mahoney.
Algonquin, 233 pages, \$21.95.

When Dr. Mahoney began as a veterinarian, it was his ambition to become the best horse doctor in Ireland. He wound up as the director of a laboratory for experimental medicine and a consultant for far-flung medical work with animals. His memoir begins with Molly, a runt puppy afflicted with most of the ills known to dog. The doctor and his wife salvaged her with considerable, slightly wild, difficulty, and she

became a fine pet. This story leads to reflections on the use of animals for research, which Dr. Mahoney regrets but would not abandon if he could. It is to be hoped that this charming, kindly, gentle book will not inspire any animal-rights fanatics to blow up research centers. That is not at all what the author has in mind.

Surveyor

by G. W. Hawkes.
MacMurray & Beck,
250 pages, \$20.00.

The narrator of Mr. Hawkes's novel is a Korean War veteran who, with a crippled Army buddy, has spent years surveying a stretch of western desert for a mysterious foundation. Their solitude is disrupted by a young woman undertaking a peculiar film project and by a gang of fossil hunters. The hostilities and misunderstandings that ensue lure the reader along with hints of some profound, or at least provocative, impending revelation. The implied promise is never kept.

Split: A Counterculture Childhood

by Lisa Michaels.
Houghton Mifflin, 307 pages,
\$23.00.

Ms. Michaels's parents were collegiate idealists and would-be reformers when they married, in the early 1960s. As the author sees it, her mother proposed to improve society bit by bit and one-on-one, while her father was for bringing it down in one grand smash. He joined the Weathermen and served a hitch in jail, and the marriage smashed. Everybody eventually settled on the West Coast, where Ms. Michaels spent her youth bouncing between her mother's quiet enterprises in the north and her father's indefatigable pamphleteering in the south. She felt at home in neither place, not through any distrust of her parents but as a part-time member of both their groups. That uncertainty, and the wariness that accompanied it, are well and often touchingly conveyed in this disarmingly amiable reminiscence.

—Phoebe-Lou Adams



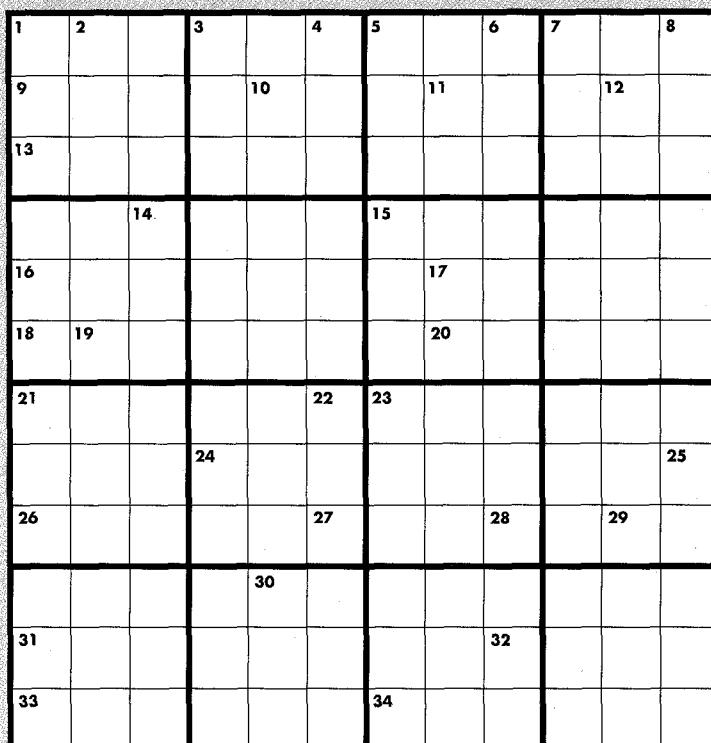
THE PUZZLER

by Emily Cox and Henry Rathvon

In Common

Instead of indicating where entries begin and end, the heavy bars in this puzzle divide the diagram into four rows and four columns of four sections each. Clue answers should be entered without regard to the heavy bars, but otherwise normally. When all answers have been entered, the four sections in each row will be found to have one letter in common, as will the four sections in each column. When these letters have been placed on the corresponding blanks above the columns and beside the rows, they will describe how everything is connected. Answers include four proper nouns.

The solution to last month's Puzzler appears on page 107.



Across

1. Clever little mammal that eats insects by day (6)
5. Capital way of operating boat (6)
9. Cut old executive department before November (4)
11. Western sound's beat (5)
13. Rode old horses around, maintaining a bountiful land (8)
15. *Broadcast News* broadcast is about half true (6)
16. Free to go, felt *soooo* fantastic (9)
18. Promoting falconry (7)
20. Scopes attorney initially getting into god of antiquity (5)
21. Dam site for a waterfowl (5)
22. In England, notices bananas, starved (7)
24. Meditation about wrong is fear-inducing program (9)

26. Fly up to an alien (3,3)
30. Liquid flow: pure and strong (8)
31. Picks out satisfactory cookware (5)
32. Recited poem was short (4)
33. Housing height, to little bird (6)
34. Provide with resilience (6)

Down

1. That girl Friday takes in a bundle (5)
2. Steer Henry's van to the left of tree (4)
3. Name for a guy with a broken nose (4)
4. Unconventional clothing worn by monster (6)
5. Some hipsters take too many drugs Sunday after mass (4)
6. Listened to a pop singer and actress helping (5)
7. Vehicle with one adult parked around entertainment place for food (9)
8. Fret about senator suffering a reversal in consequence of a leak (7)
10. Present a trade for some candy (7)
12. Be lazy with regard to dictated diet (3-3)
14. Bark covering half of Indian dwelling aperture (3,6)
17. Enjoyed being quite blushing about a victory (7)
18. Musician's piano is acquired by Broadway wordsmith (7)
19. Key senior citizens group keeps quiet (1,5)
23. Back road has floods (6)
24. Blow on hot food processor? (5)
25. Fungus-covered shape in front of yard (5)
27. Great book, in my opinion (4)
28. Hold up spinning blade (4)
29. Something that burns in flue, unexpectedly (4)

Note: The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For a complete introduction to clue-solving, send an addressed, stamped long envelope to The Atlantic Puzzler, 77 North Washington Street, Boston, Mass. 02114.

WORD WATCH

by Anne H. Soukhanov

Beltropolis *noun*, the 257 square miles within the Capital Beltway, including the District of Columbia and parts of Maryland and northern Virginia: "If it were a city, the area inside the Beltway would rank among the nation's top five most populous. With a population of 1.6 million, the area inside the Beltway—call it '*Beltropolis*'—contains more people than the city of Philadelphia" (*Washington Post*).

BACKGROUND: *Beltropolis* is an offshoot of the common expression "inside the Beltway," whence came *Beltway insider*—someone with access to government information and power. According to demographers, *Beltropolitans* have a median annual household income far greater than the U.S. median, and tend to have upscale lifestyle preferences. White-collar workers outnumber blue-collar ones disproportionately, by more than five to one, and the *Beltropolis* contains a huge *wonking class*—those whose interests, if not jobs, are focused on issues of federal policy. (A segment of this *wonking class* consists of *Beltway bandits*, consultants and scholars who work on a fee basis for the government.) *Beltropolis* joins a growing list of descriptive place names not found as such on most maps: for example, *Pacific Rim*, *Rust Belt*, and *Sun Belt*.

A selection of terms that have newly been coined, that have recently acquired new currency, or that have taken on new meanings, compiled by the executive editor of The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition.

K&R industry *noun*, the growing number of personal-security companies that offer so-called kidnap-and-ransom insurance—costly policies that, in the event of a kidnapping, provide ransom money and the services of a professional negotiator—to high-risk clients, such as foreign-based CEOs and bankers, famous people, and the super-rich: "International kidnapping has become an emblem for the 90s. . . . [an American man's] kidnapping [in Colombia] . . . sheds light on one of the world's murkiest legitimate businesses—the . . . *K&R industry* (*Vanity Fair*).

BACKGROUND: Most *K&R* professionals were once spies, Scotland Yard detectives, or Special Forces personnel. They are typically pitted against professional kidnapping squads made up of former leftist revolutionaries. Given this combination, it is hardly surprising that the lingo of *K&R* is a blend of military jargon, street slang, and bureaucratese: *K&R operatives* on assignment are on *deployment*. On occasion they deal with *fast-food kidnappings*—ones involving relatively low ransoms, of perhaps

\$30,000 to \$60,000, and rapid negotiations. Although *K&R companies* offer little in the way of preventive services, some clients, in addition to paying annual *K&R premiums* ranging from \$10,000 to upwards of \$150,000, buy *vaccinations* directly from potential kidnappers: in Bogotá, for example, a \$60,000 *vaccination* is said to protect against a \$500,000 kidnapping. (For their part, kidnappers follow the *Preserve the Porcelain Rule*, the aim being to keep the victim alive.)

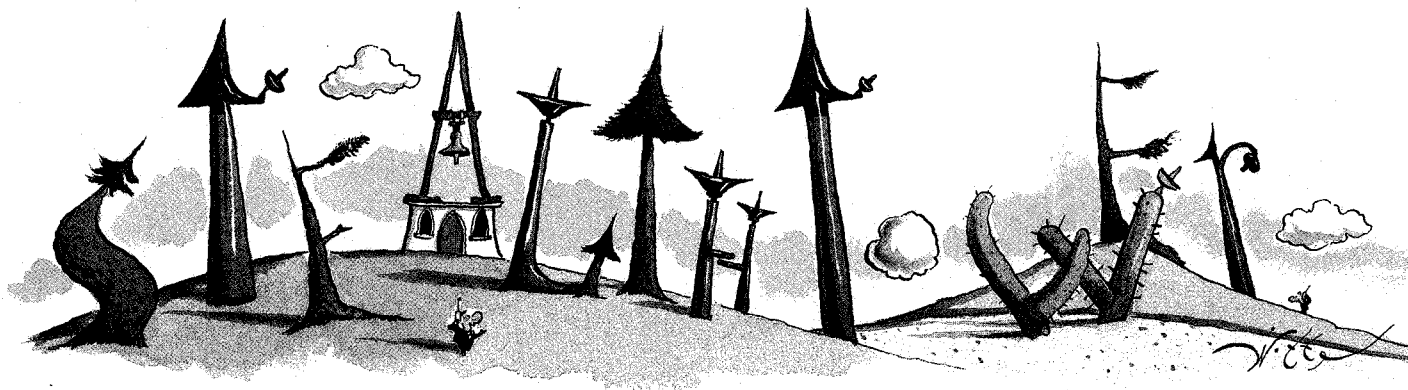
lexia *noun*, a freestanding block of fiction linked electronically to one or more others in a digital environment, so that a reader can explore and interact with a larger piece of fiction, choosing from many different story angles and possible outcomes: "Some writers are experimenting with hypertext fiction—Web-based stories and novels that allow the reader to navigate through the text in a non-linear fashion by clicking from one *lexia* to the next" (*The Nation*).

BACKGROUND: This term is said to have been coined in connection with conventional, linear narra-

tives by the French literary theorist Roland Barthes (who used it to mean simply blocks of text), and adapted to the world of hypertext fiction by the author George Landow. Although the term is well known among devotees of hypertext fiction, it has to date appeared only infrequently in the general press; however, citations seem to be on the rise.

stealth tower *noun*, a camouflaged wireless-telephone-communications pole: "An unlikely symbol of a wireless communications revolution sweeping the United States. . . . is one of hundreds of '*stealth towers*'" (*New York Times*).

BACKGROUND: Phone companies trying to soften the visual impact of an explosive increase in antenna sites have begun to adopt *stealth policies*, in effect disguising antennas in existing or newly created structures or in artificial replicas of local flora. One *stealth tower*, in Franklin Lakes, N.J., consists of a 100-foot-tall synthetic pine tree, with cables running through its bark and small antennas clustered discreetly in its realistic-looking green boughs. Others include fake windmills and, in Derby, Conn., a mock bell tower on a hilltop church. Under consideration for the Phoenix, Arizona, area: a three-story-tall synthetic saguaro cactus.



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